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A HISTORY OF ENGLISH FURNITURE

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PLATE I (AGE OF OAK)

CREDENCE

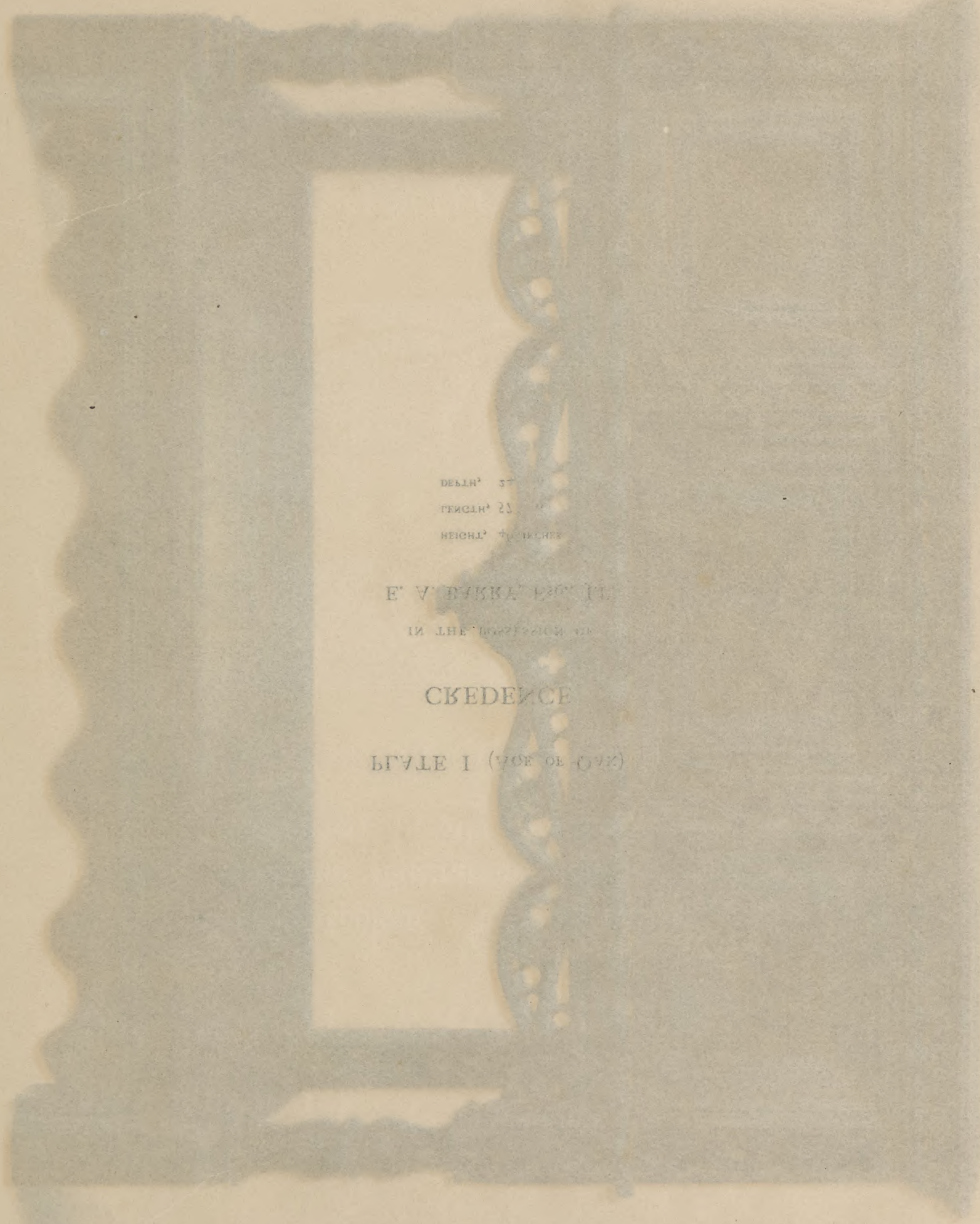
IN THE POSSESSION OF

E. A. BARRY, ESQ., J.P.

HEIGHT, 46 INCHES

LENGTH, 57 ,,

DEPTH, 24 ,,



A HISTORY OF ENGLISH FURNITURE

BY PERCY MACQUOID, R.I.

With Plates in Colour after Shirley Slocombe, and numerous Illustrations selected and arranged by the Author

THE AGE OF OAK



LONDON
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16 HENRIETTA STREET, COVENT GARDEN, W.C.
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PREFACE

IN the arrangement of this work, it will be found that the subject has been divided into four periods. The first, dating from 1500 to 1660, comprising furniture that can be attributed to the Renaissance and its evolution from the Gothic, may be termed 'The Age of Oak.' The second, from 1660 to 1720, where the change is varied by the Restoration and Dutch influence, followed by a distinctly assertive English spirit, may be called 'The Age of Walnut.' The third period, where the introduction from France of fresh ideas in design clearly marked another change, lasting from 1720 to 1770, which we call 'The Age of Mahogany'; and the fourth, from 1770 to 1820, inspired by an affectation for all things classical, combined with a curiously unbalanced taste, can best be described as 'The Composite Age.'

It is proposed to deal with the history, development, and evolution of English furniture only, but as the sources of its inspiration can so frequently be traced to foreign origin, it will be necessary to introduce occasionally some of these examples, in order to more clearly explain the different types and their close analogy. The comparison will be useful also for defining where the English craftsman at certain periods departed from his foreign model and struck into an original path.

Inception of design in architecture and its dependent offspring, furniture, was in the Middle Ages wholly due to ecclesiastical influence; and as the more gifted members of religious confraternities were moved from country to country to gain knowledge as well as to impart it, it is impossible to determine now how far design in art of this early period was really indigenous to this country. As long as the monastic architect and his pupils were the originators of furniture, it was natural that such objects should be ecclesiastical and severe in character, for the manners and customs of all periods have had the strongest imprint on design; there

was also a practical necessity for its solidity, as a man armed cap-à-pie must have required a very heavily constructed seat. It was therefore reserved for the artist, or a craftsman with strong artistic perception (and it must be remembered that a so-called company of cabinetmakers existed as early as 1480), to evolve from these solid and almost barbaric forms the lighter and more elegant creations that we are accustomed to-day to associate with the word Furniture. For a long period the craftsman was entirely influenced by the architecture that surrounded him, and, being unimaginative, he borrowed all required detail for his decoration from either structure, metal work, or textiles. These being all designed, if not actually carried but, by foreigners, may account for the reason why early English furniture lacks the contemporary taste found in France, Germany, and Italy, for art feeling in England was neither inborn nor spontaneous. Indeed, until the end of the fifteenth century, the English were far behind those other nations in the luxury and artistic appointments of their great houses; the simultaneous spread of novelty in foreign countries was greatly facilitated by the journeyman who travelled from city to city with his designs, and who perpetually had the opportunity of accumulating the knowledge and fresh inspirations of the countries through which he passed. Patronage and interest were both limited in England, and the sea was such a formidable obstacle, that tastes and fashions do not appear to have been accepted in this country until firmly established on the Continent. When Richard II. married the young Princess Isobel of France, he was much condemned by his English subjects for the unnecessary and unprecedented luxury of his palaces; on the other hand, the young bride excited the greatest pity and sympathy from her fellow-countrymen at being torn from the comforts of her own home and transplanted to what they considered the rough and rude surroundings of an English palace.

About 1480 a sudden stride in domestic civilisation took place in England, and decorative furniture was for the first time gradually introduced into private houses. Previous to this it had been confined to the

royal and episcopal palaces, monasteries, and the castles of the great nobles, while burghers, merchants, and citizens had been content with the most severely simple necessities, for we find no early individual instance of cultivated taste amongst this class, such as Jean van Arteveldt of Flanders, Cosimo di Medici of Italy, or Jacques Cœur of France. At this period detail in the decoration of architecture lost its large simplicity in the effort to produce a lighter and more romantic effect. This change, known as flamboyant, had doubtless much to do with the origin of beauty of detail in wood-carving, the proportions and ornamentation introduced lending themselves to reproduction on articles of furniture, while the much desired and welcomed peace, brought about by the union of the houses of York and Lancaster, consolidated trade, and encouraged the demand for all manner of crafts in England, until by degrees the finer furniture, which had been all imported from abroad, began to be manufactured in this country. At first these were but coarse copies of foreign examples, and though beds, chairs, tables, and coffers were no doubt largely made here, it is not till the middle of the sixteenth century that the movement succeeded in creating a distinctive and national taste in sufficient quantity to enable us to obtain existing examples of its style. All very early English furniture that has come down to us is of oak. Deal and chestnut were rare, valuable woods in those days; what was made of beech and elm has perished, and walnut was not grown for its wood in England till about 1500. As an instance of the estimation in which deal was held, we find that Henry VIII. had a room panelled in this wood at Nonesuch, 'by which he set great store.' Preference was also given to oak as the representative wood of this country, and for its unquestionable durability. The carting about of furniture over rough roads, when a great personage moved from one of his castles to another in order 'that the same might sweeten,' must have demanded great strength in both material and construction, and these periodical removals of personal furniture, from the beds downwards, prove that the supply of such necessities was extremely limited.



FIG. 1.—OAK GOTHIC CUPBOARD. Height, 4 feet; length, 4 feet 4½ inches; depth, 1 foot 11 inches.
Property of C. E. KEMPE, Esq.

CHAPTER I

IT will be best to subdivide this 'Age of Oak' into three periods: Gothic, Elizabethan, and Jacobean.

Gothic.—That rooms were bare and provided with but few forms of furniture in the Middle Ages, is clearly proved by the artists who illustrated the horæ, histories, and romances of those times in this country. There is no reason to doubt these representations being correct in their general impression, and they are our only guide to the arrangement and utility of individual objects. In these MS. miniatures the furniture is invariably coloured, and from the traces of paint that still remain on some existing ecclesiastical pieces, we may conclude that domestic furniture was frequently painted, and in very bright colours. As these colours were mostly rendered in some form of tempera or wax, it is easy to understand how in time the paint completely disappeared, leaving only the somewhat clumsy forms; the early furniture was evidently also much ornamented by hangings, and dressed up with valances and cushions of bright and rich materials. Of this plain but painted furniture, little or nothing survives, the armoires or livery cupboards, shown in figs. 1, 2, 3, would have been painted with sacred or heraldic subjects, and resemble types of an earlier date. In fig. 1, of about the date 1500, the front is composed of six panels, two of which form doors, perforated with openings of Gothic tracery cut in the solid for purposes of ventilation, as food, candles, wine, and many eatables were kept in such cupboards. The top and base have been reconstructed, otherwise the piece is in its original condition. In fig. 2, of rather earlier date, the front is made of three oak planks, the centre opening as a door; here there is no attempt at framing, the boards being finished at the edge

by a simple channel moulding. The inside is divided into three compartments, and retains the original shelves. In fig. 3, the openings at the sides take the form of windows, perpendicular in style, those in the door being circular and spiral in motive, with no attempt at mouldings round the decoration. These last two pieces are of Berkshire origin and of about



FIG. 2.—ARMOIRE OR LIVERY CUPBOARD. Oak. Height, 3 feet 10 inches; width, 3 feet 10 inches; depth, 1 foot 6 inches. Property of MORGAN WILLIAMS, Esq.

the same date, 1475. With the exception of the hinges, their condition is original throughout.

The panelling and even the wall space above were also frequently



FIG. 3.—ARMOIRE OR LIVERY CUPBOARD. Oak. Height, 3 feet 10 inches; width, 3 feet 2 inches; depth, 1 foot 5 inches. Property of MORGAN WILLIAMS, Esq.



FIG. 4.—OAK BUFFET. Height, 2 feet 6 inches; length, 5 feet 6 inches. Property of ERNEST GEORGE, Esq.

painted in colours with varied designs. Original examples of painted panelling are rare, but there is an interesting room in existence in Wiltshire where the stiles and rails are a rich vermilion, and the long Tudor panels olive coloured, on which are stencilled a darker green early sixteenth-century design. Such rooms, with their painted walls and painted furniture, with their rich hangings and tapestries, were on the first floor, and used by the lord and lady of the house as their private apartments; the most important room being a combination of dining and bedroom, with furniture consisting of a table; flanking this against the wall a long bench, with back and canopy, termed a dossier, that could be used as a day-bed or a seat for meals, capable of holding four persons; two buffets, very similar to the foreign credences, for ornamental vessels; another table on which were laid articles connected with the toilet; a standing cupboard or hutch, used as a washstand; a bed, with heavy curtains at the foot, looped up during the day into the form of a long bag; a few stools and a *prie-dieu* completing the room. The floor was strewn with rushes, on which, in the houses of the very rich, were laid small Eastern carpets. Clothes were changed and kept in the Garde-robe, a small room adjoining; the bath was, however, taken in a wooden tub in front of the fireplace, in which probably a fire burnt all the year round, for until the middle of the sixteenth century our ancestors slept naked, and glass in the windows was a great luxury.

The large hall was the general sitting-room, in which the principal meals of the household and all entertaining took place. The furniture here consisted at one end of a long table on a raised portion of the floor, behind which was an important seat with a dossier and overhanging dais or canopy. Chests, forms, and benches composed the other seats, and round the large open fireplace were settles and perhaps a couple of chairs; a low side-table for service stood on either side of the principal seat, and a buffet for the silver stood in the centre of the wooden panelled screen, containing two entrances that formed the other end of the room; the

portion of the hall cut off in this manner by the screen formed the minstrel gallery, and below it the passage leading to the outer door. One of these low side-tables is given in fig. 4. Their introduction, late in the fifteenth century, marks an epoch of practical construction in furniture and the invention of the drawer table-top, for hitherto tables had been either trestle, or with fixed tops capable of no enlargement; the piece of furniture in this manner could serve the various purposes of a side serving-table or buffet, a long table for meals, a cupboard for food, or a seat. The two lower leaves that form the extension of the draw-top are in this instance lost, and has been a little shortened; with these exceptions the buffet is in its original state, and in admirable preservation. It is difficult to realise how this comparatively rude and clumsily constructed piece could be contemporary with the highly finished and beautiful architecture, fabrics, armour, enamels, and plate that existed, and it is unlikely that anything better of its kind was made



FIG. 5.—OAK BUFFET. Height, 2 feet 1 inch; length, 4 feet 5 inches. Property of T. CHARBONNIER, Esq.

in England, for all relics of this furniture are of the same barbaric quality. Such a side-table would have belonged to some great noble or wealthy prelate; had it been made for royalty, the only difference would have been the introduction of the royal arms, with perhaps elaborate painting and gilding. It stands upon quadrangular legs, bordered on the inside by a rude double channel moulding, forming a finish to the bottom rail; the front is divided into three oblong panels, those on the outside forming doors; they are framed in an unusually bold one-inch moulding, with a deep bevel at bottom: the panels all differ, and are deeply and boldly carved with Gothic tracery of about 1475; the centre panel, which is bevelled out so that the face of the carving is flush with that of the framing, is geometrically centred, contrasting admirably with the eccentric lines of the others. The hinges are original and quite plain; the lock-plates, which have lost their sliding bolts, are also plain, and all of English make; traces of perforated cresting survive on the

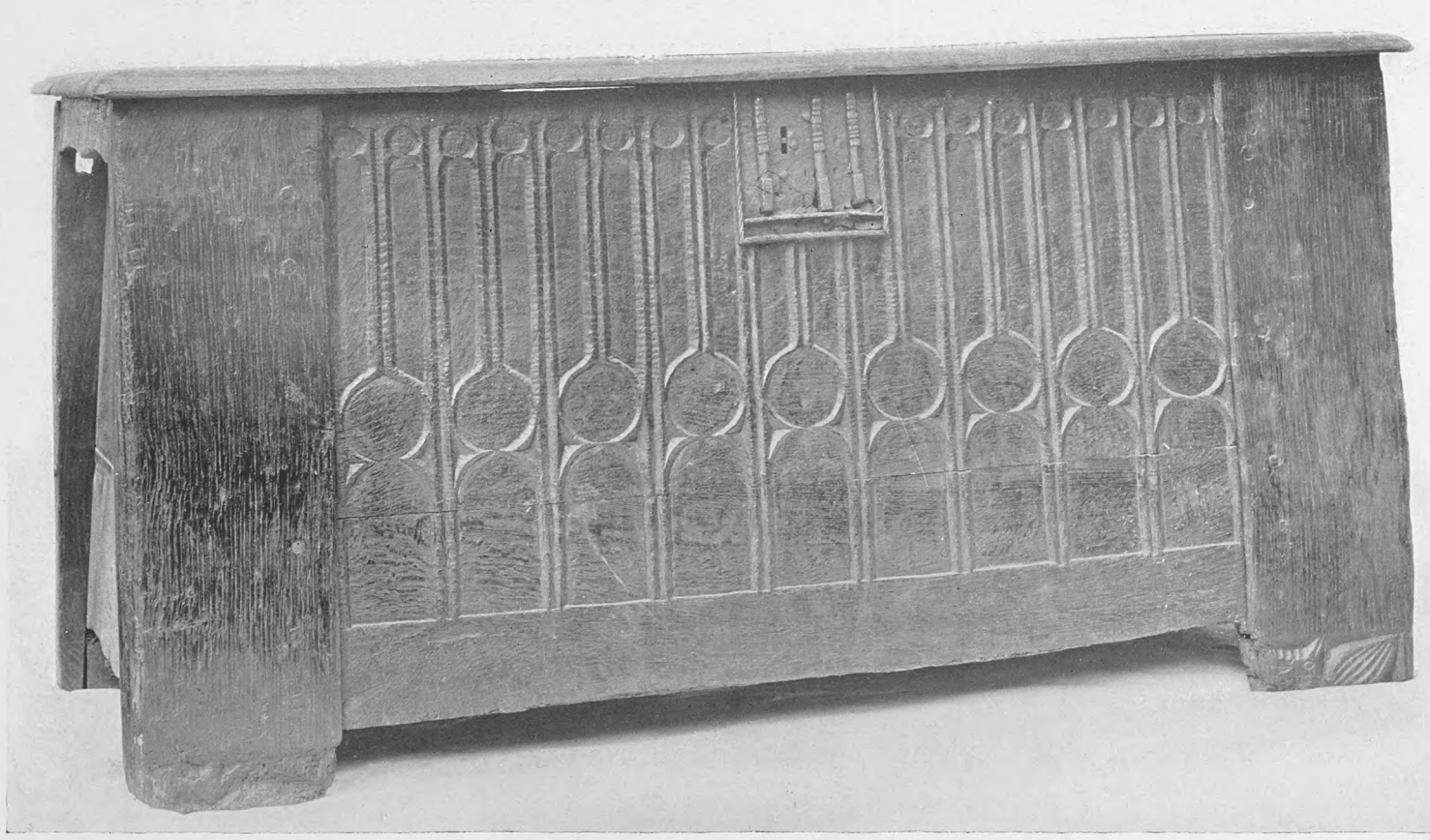
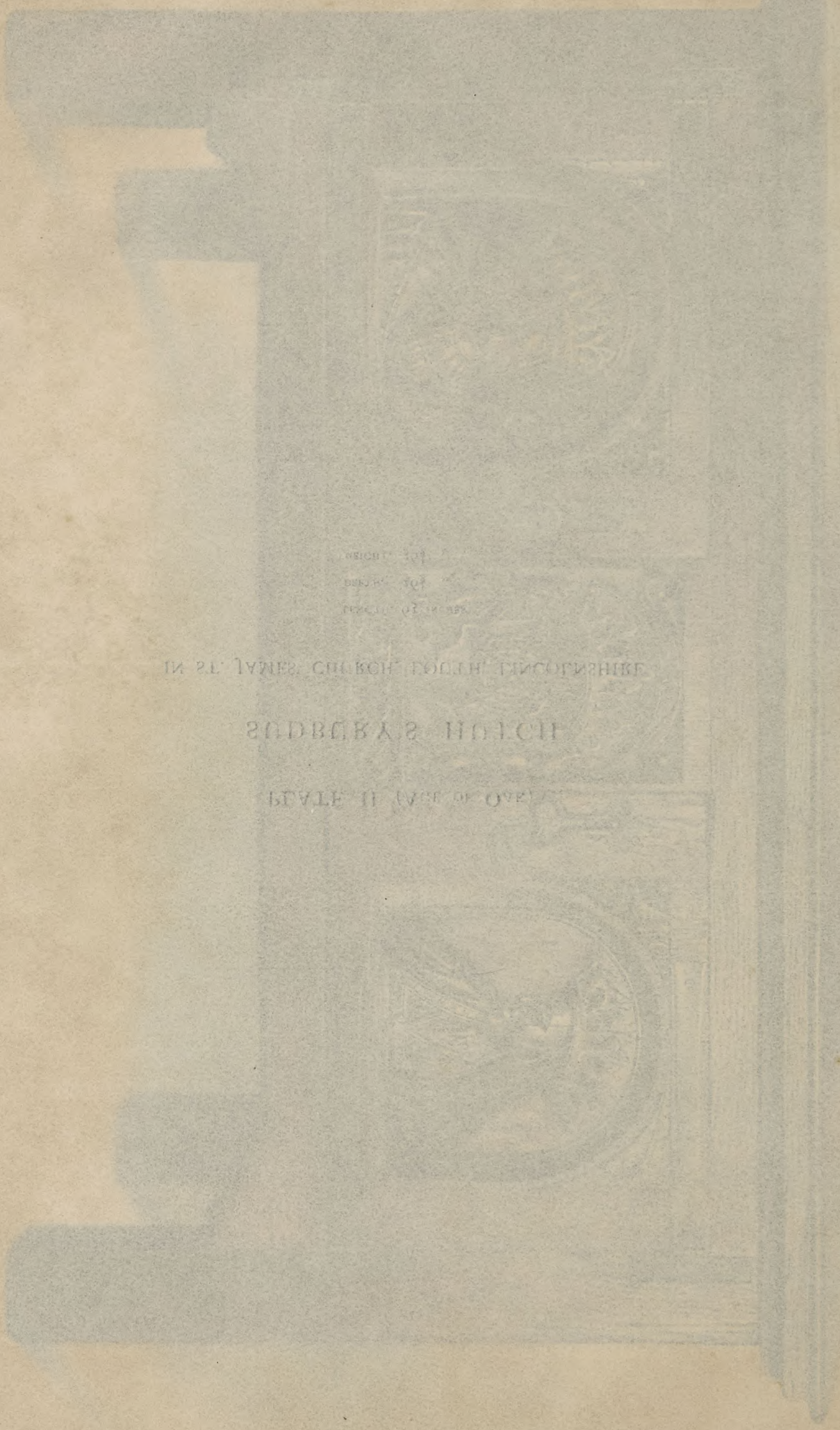


FIG. 6.—OAK CHEST. Property of MORGAN WILLIAMS, Esq.

left-hand plate. The introduction of small panels of checker carving above and below the lock-plates was a favourite Gothic treatment that lasted into the Renaissance; compare figs. 37 and 38. The sides are decorated with horizontally placed linenfold panels; the colour of the oak is a deep chocolate, having been heavily oiled and varnished at one time. Fig. 5 is another of these rare pieces of furniture, about ten years later in date: it has exceptionally large and bold linenfold decoration throughout; the centre panel forms a door, the lock of which is unfortunately missing, though the plain hinges are still there; the lower rail is cut on the underside into the form of a cusped and depressed arch. These pieces are of Devonshire make. In both specimens, small projecting brackets or blocks help to support the top.

A more elaborate piece of furniture of this early date is that known as 'Sudbury's Hutch,' Plate II., in Louth Church, Lincolnshire. Here the whole structure is more box-like in form, and is almost a coffer on legs; the front opens in two doors, leaving a fixed panel as a centre. It was given to Louth Church by a vicar named Sudbury, who held that office between 1461 and 1504; and documents are in existence, stating that the hutch was repaired in 1586 and 1666, and that it was used for the purposes of keeping coals, candles, and money for the poor. The doors are carved with extremely characteristic portraits of Henry VII. and Elizabeth of York, framed in classical arches of the Renaissance; the centre panel bears the combined badge of York and Lancaster crowned, with the lion of the Plantagenets and the greyhound of the Tudors as supporters. The lower rail of the hutch is chamfered, suggesting a low Tudor arch; the whole design is bold in style, and shows a fascinating and original sense of proportion. As the King bears his crown and sceptre, and the Queen her crown, with hair long and flowing as at her coronation, one can only presume the hutch was made to commemorate this event; it is at any rate unlikely that any hutch-maker would have suddenly broken out into representations of his King and Queen except at a



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PLATE II (AGE OF OAK)

SUDBURY'S HUTCH

IN ST. JAMES' CHURCH, LOUTH, LINCOLNSHIRE

LENGTH, 63 INCHES

DEPTH, 26½ „

HEIGHT, 36½ „





FIG. 7.—OAK CHEST. Property of Messrs. GILL AND REIGATE.

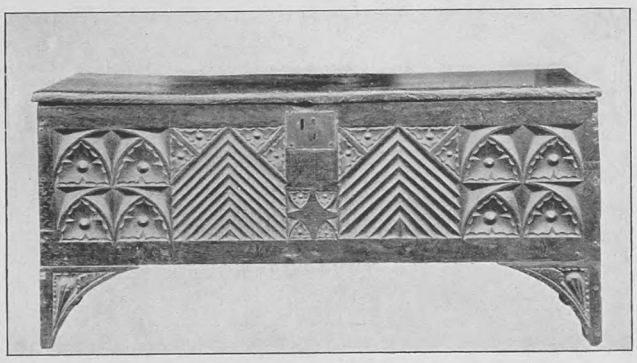


FIG. 8.—OAK COFFER.
Property of A. L. RADFORD, Esq.

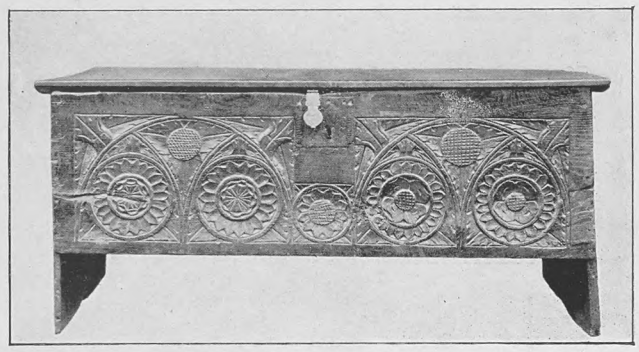


FIG. 9.—OAK COFFER.
Property of A. L. RADFORD, Esq.

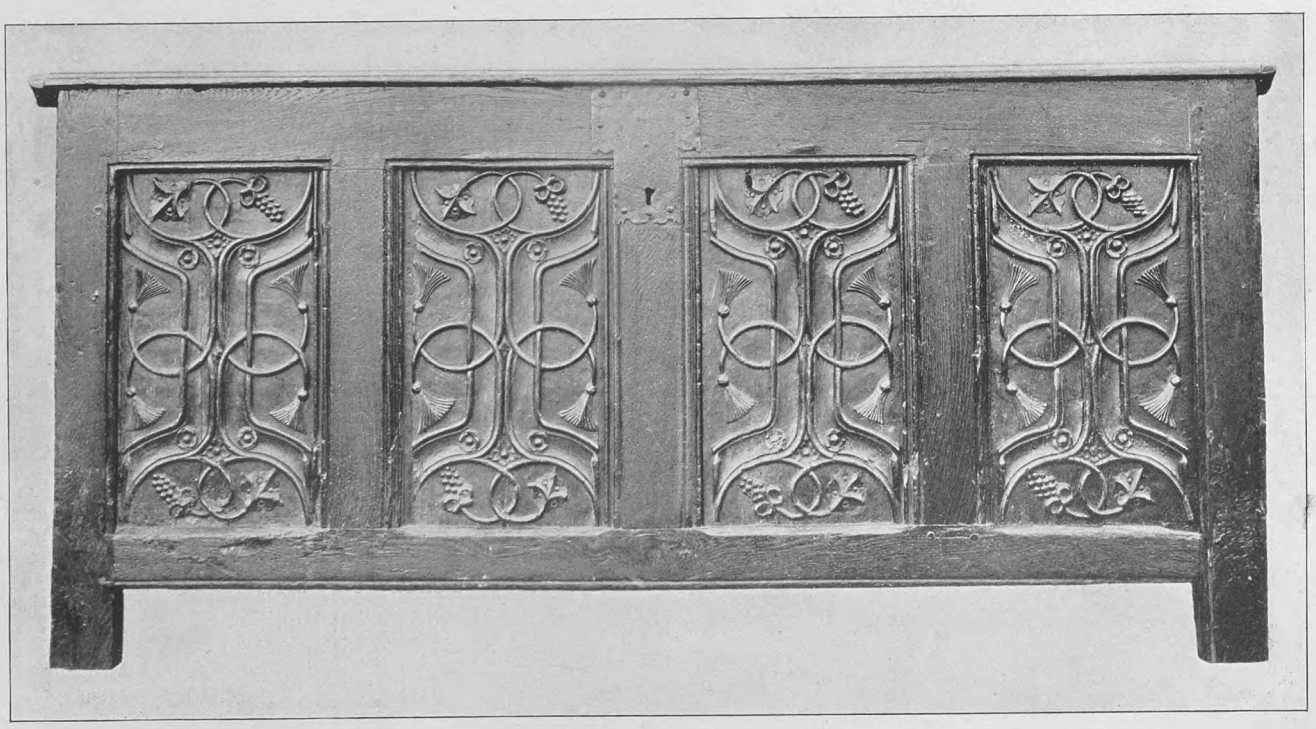


FIG. 10.—OAK CHEST. Height, 2 feet 7 inches; length, 5 feet 2 inches.
Property of A. L. RADFORD, Esq.

time connected with some important royal function; but it is more than probable that he would have been commissioned to commemorate the long-deferred coronation of the Queen, which took place in 1487.

The chest or coffer was a most favourite form of furniture, as it could serve the various purposes of bench, armoire, hutch, a dresser, and also a travelling-box when changing houses. In the royal bedchambers they were used by the highest personages of the Court; to sit on a chair would have been a breach of etiquette, and constant reference to courtiers seating themselves on coffers in the royal antechambers are to be found in old chronicles. It is not surprising, therefore, how many of these are even now in existence, for they were more extensively used by all classes than any other article of furniture. Mr. Roe has dealt most ably with these in his work on old chests and coffers, but of the more domestic coffers we give six examples. The first of these, fig. 6, is of the early part of the fourteenth century; the uprights of the frame are massive, and terminate at the base in winged lions, now almost worn away; the slides slope inwards in the usual fashion of the time. The front is carved in low tracery in the early Gothic taste. This same motive of tracery is found in fig. 7, of about 1420, although a hundred years of evolution had passed, and it is difficult to imagine a more beautiful sub-division of the arch than this chest front represents. French, no doubt, in inspiration, the execution is undoubtedly English, made at the time when an Englishman was practically King of France. The vessels incised on the uprights are representative of the metal water-pots of the time. Fig. 8 is also early in style, the front being formed of one piece of wood, and the decoration not being divided into panels by a framework of stiles. The date of its manufacture, about 1470, is rather later than its fashion; the outer panels are carved in bold Gothic trefoils, while the other two are what is termed 'chevronny,' and probably refer to the coat-armour of the owner. The original long Gothic lock-plate has been replaced by one that is quite ordinary, beneath which small trefoils in arched com-

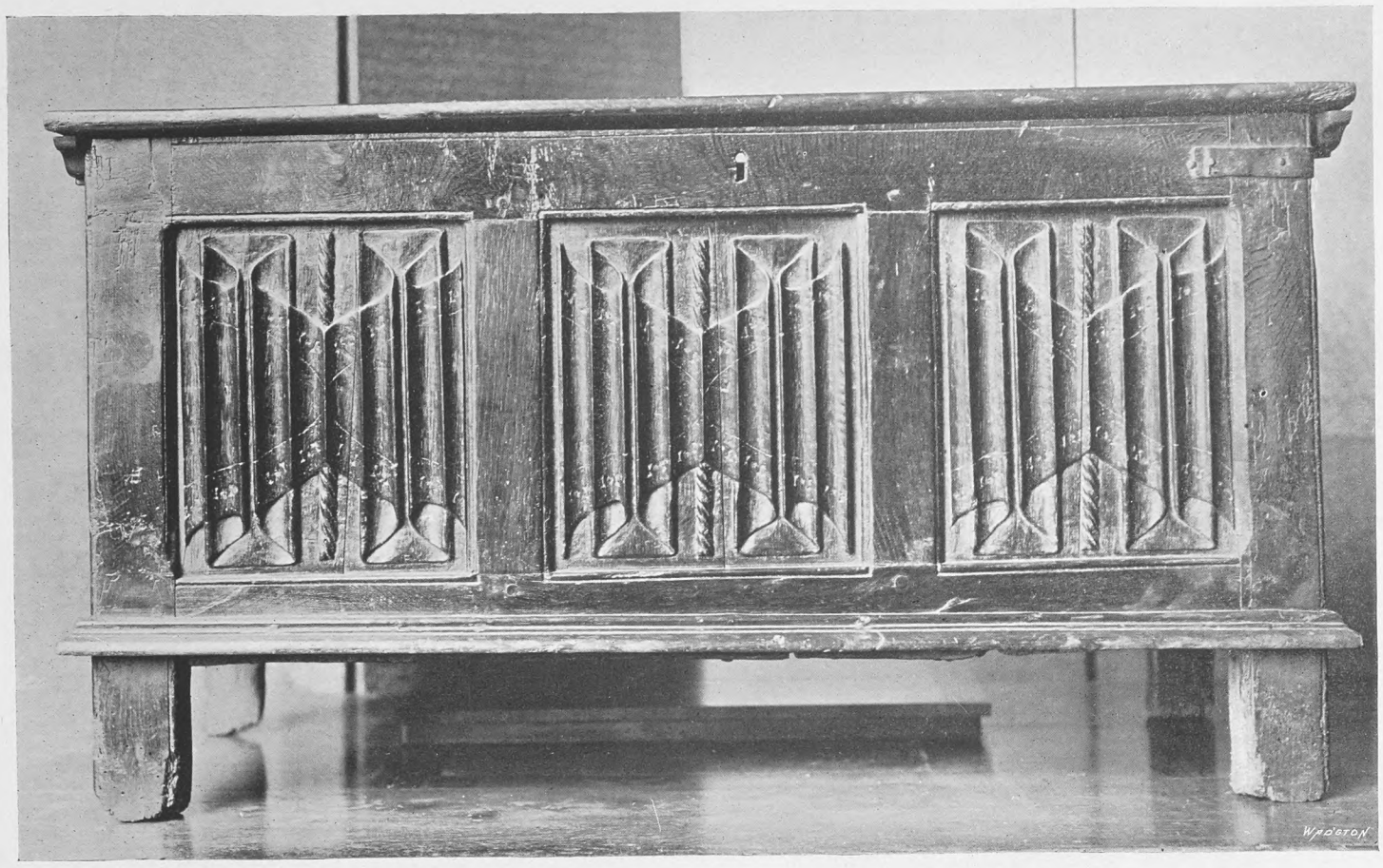


FIG. 11.—OAK CHEST. Height, 2 feet 3 inches; length, 4 feet 2 inches.



FIG. 12.—OAK COFFRET. Property of J. BARRY, Esq.

partments are repeated. The legs are spandrelled, which again proves an early type, and the wear on the lid from constant use as a seat is clearly observable. Fig. 9 is a similar chest of rough make and humble origin, probably the work of a village carpenter. These two are fair specimens of the common bench coffer that were universally used by the middle classes, or put into the unimportant rooms of a house. A chest of better workmanship, though of later date, about 1490, is shown in fig. 10. This is a very simple though perfect specimen of the ordinary clothes and linen chest that continued to be made for two hundred years, until its

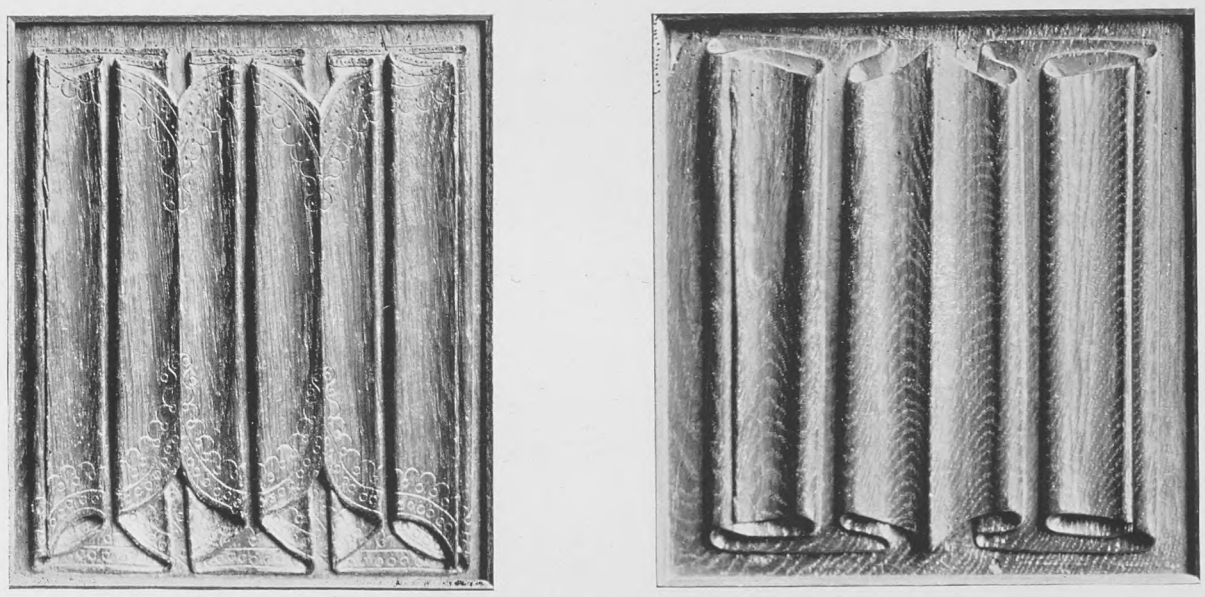


FIG. 13.—OAK LINENFOLD PANELS

place was gradually usurped by the chest with drawers. There is a strange sense of flatness in the decoration of the front; the leading lines show thin and cord-like on the surface, a sure sign in art of a period drawing to its close, for with the exhaustion of all variety of its inspiration, every evolution ends more or less as it began. The pattern in this instance is of Flemish origin, no doubt derived from I, the first letter of the word Ἰησοῦς. Bishop's cords and tassels, with the grape and vine leaf, complete the symbolism of the design. Another very usual mode of decorating chests at this time was by the linenfold or parchment pattern, as in fig. 11; on these panels, the rod on which the parchment is rolled is intro-



FIG. 14.—OAK LINENFOLD CUPBOARD DOOR

duced. The little strong box, fig. 12, is of the latter part of the fifteenth century; here the tracery of the panels is cut very deeply and boldly, and the plain surfaces of the stiles and rails, without any mouldings, frame the carving. Such a box was probably used for deeds and other precious papers when travelling. It is banded on all sides with iron, and protected by four locks, which were originally secured by staples, bolted on the inside. It would take a persistent person with a sharp saw-file some time to cut the four thick iron hasps to the lock-plates, and this would be the only way of forcing the box, unless the woodwork was destroyed. These boxes, when larger, were screwed down from the inside to the joists of the floor for extra security, and contained the money, plate, and similar treasures of the house. This is proved by wills of this time, as on more than one occasion the strong box is bequeathed, 'but without the papers and valuables contained therein.'

The linenfold pattern, so called from its resemblance to a folded napkin, and emblematical of the chalice veil that covered the host, was a very favourite form of decorating the panels of furniture at the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth centuries. It was first used on the screens of the churches, and although Flemish in its origin, quickly became identified with this country. It was continued well into the century, and is found as late as 1550, forming the lower motive with full Renaissance decoration above. The earlier forms of the pattern had but few folds and were plain, save for fine cut lines representing the embroidery on the edge of the napkin, like fig. 13. Later the folds were fleur-de-luced, or bunches of grapes and other emblems were introduced, as in the small door of a cupboard, fig. 14.

Cupboards, or hutches as they were called, were a very usual form of furniture. Fig. 15 is one of these early hutches, opening in two plain doors, hung with hinges of elegant form; these, however, are probably of foreign workmanship, for their size is disproportionate to the doors, and large quantities of foreign locks and hinges were imported into England to

complete the furniture manufactured here. The panels on either side of the doors are decorated in plain linen pattern without fold; the cornice is most effective, with its bold Gothic hollow repeated again round the panels. The piece of furniture was originally painted vermilion, which



FIG. 15.—OAK DOUBLE HUTCH. Height, 3 feet; width, 2 feet 10 inches; depth, 1 foot 6 inches.
Property of MORGAN WILLIAMS, Esq.

the present owner has removed. In fig. 16, the bold setting of the door panel in its wide framing, the width of the mouldings, compared with the plain surface of the stiles, and deep splay of the bottom rail, all go to prove that the general character of the piece is that of quite the



FIG. 16.—OAK HUTCH. Property of GUY LAKING, Esq.

beginning of the century. The folds of the linen are cusped and left plain; and although the horizontal arrangement of linenfold is frequently found in the lower compartments of this class of furniture, in this particular instance it has probably been added at a later date to form a drawer. The top has also been renewed. The iron-work is in good preservation, and of interesting form. Fig. 17 is another and somewhat larger specimen; it is divided into five panels, four of which form doors; in the top centre panel the linenfold is trefoiled at the points, a very favourite Flemish pattern; but there are so many instances of this variety to be found in England, both on church screens and wall panelling, that the decision as to whether a piece is of English or foreign origin cannot rest upon the actual shape of the fold. The

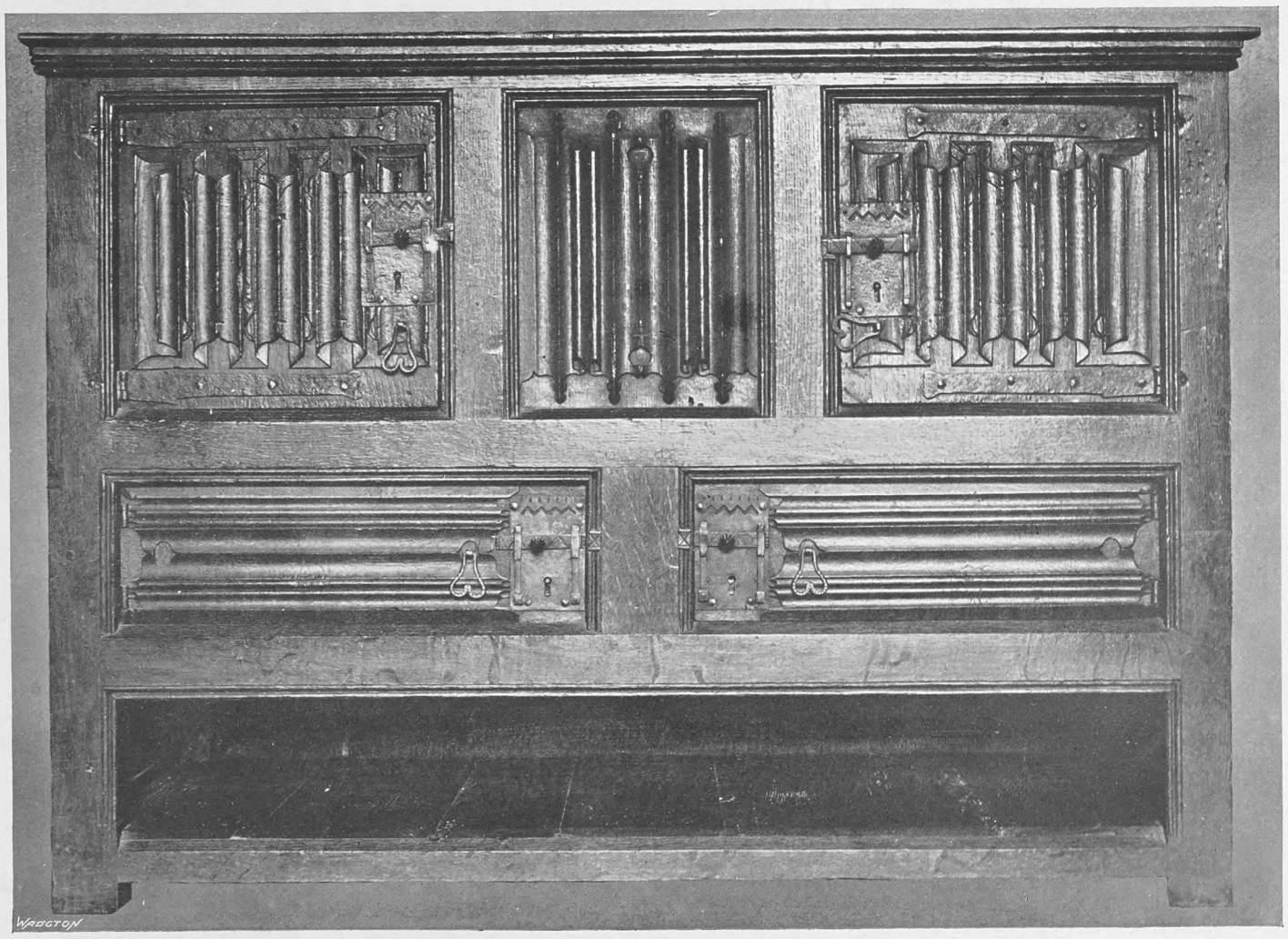


FIG. 17.—OAK HUTCH. Height, 3 feet 4 inches; length, 4 feet 9 inches; depth, 1 foot 11 inches.
Property of J. BARRY, Esq.

panels forming the upper doors are ordinary in type, and the lines representing the embroidery of the napkin are visible at the top. The lock-plates and hinges are quite plain and distinctly English; and the mouldings, in which the panels are set, point to a date a few years later than the previous example. Parts of the lower portion of the legs and bottom rail have been renewed. These pieces of furniture, from their shape and height, were often used as washstands; cupboards similar to these are continually found in German prints as serving this purpose in a bedroom.

The dossier and canopied seat to the high table in the great halls often formed part of the structure and wainscot of the wall, and this is probably why no genuine English specimen is in existence; but the lower tier of the choir stalls in the chapel of Henry VII. at Westminster Abbey, without their partitions, exactly represent the canopied bench of the fifteenth century, and are given in fig. 18. Designed for Henry Tudor about 1506, with those of St. George's Chapel, and probably by the same architect, they represent a period when Flamboyant Gothic and Perpendicular design were merged into one for the purposes of decoration. The stalls are of oak, and in both tiers measure 2 feet 2 inches across the arms from centre to centre. The small canopy to the lower tier, which forms the book-rest to the upper, is 6 feet 4 inches high, and supported by boldly necked columns that spring from corresponding mouldings of the arm rests. The back of the lower canopy starts from the top rail, divided into two arches to each stall, of open work filled in with a surbase and heading of Gothic trellis, the soffit of this canopy being carved with a fan-shaped and hexagonal decoration, while its upper side finishes in a front rail carved with an engrailed line, and is the above-mentioned book-desk to the higher stalls. The seats are reversible and known as 'miserere,' the under part or bracket being carved with tortuous grotesques and sacred emblems in the late Gothic taste (figs. 19 to 23). The lower series are divided into three portions by steps giving access to the upper

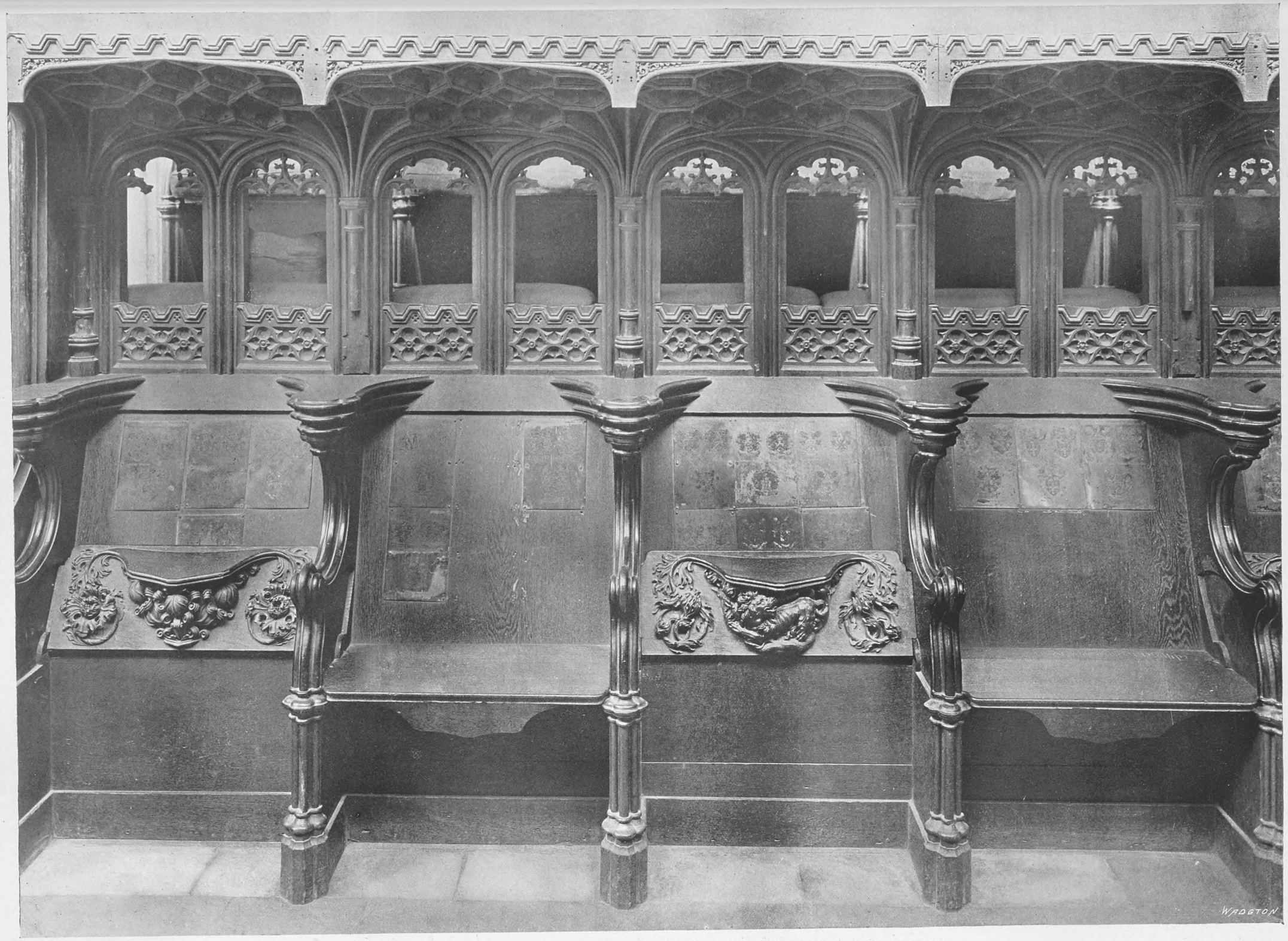


FIG. 18.—LOWER TIER OF CHOIR STALLS, WESTMINSTER ABBEY











FIGS. 19 to 23.—BRACKETS TO MISERERE SEATS, WESTMINSTER ABBEY



FIG. 24.—CANOPIES TO THE UPPER TIER OF CHOIR STALLS, WESTMINSTER ABBEY

row. The newels to each division are plain, but of most original and remarkable form ; their edge finishes in a similar moulding to the rest of the seats, surmounted by a seal top finial. The seats and arms of the upper tier correspond with the lower, but from the arms of these rise columns which support the beautiful, highly decorated canopies that form the culminating feature in the structure (fig. 24). The shafts of these columns are carved with the well-known Gothic geometrical network or honey-combing, a pattern that may originally have been inspired by the branch of the gorse, on old stems of which can be seen the exact counterpart of this design. The caps are entirely Gothic in sentiment, though the florid and intricate taste of the canopies is tending towards the foreign movement in decoration that was so shortly to make its appearance in this country. This network of tracery in wood-carving is the last effort of a period that had with its various phases practically lasted for over a hundred years. The death of Henry VII. found the chapel unfinished, but the stalls probably formed part of the original scheme. The contemporary designs by Englishmen for the actual tomb were set aside by his son, who intrusted the work to Pietro Torrigiano ; and this tomb marks the first appreciation of the Renaissance taste in England. This Renaissance taste was slow to develop and spread ; and owing to the destruction and disappearance of furniture between 1500 and 1550, these steps are difficult to trace. We are therefore obliged to resort to these great ecclesiastical examples of seats which, owing to their position, have been preserved.

A period of design known as transition is far more instructive to the student than the full development of a style ; for, apart from any human interest connecting it with important political changes, the adaptation of old ideas with the insertion of the new side by side, explains the cause of form, and enables him to date correctly all differences between these periods ; and although the examples of transition are comparatively few in number, it is necessary to pay great attention to them. The choir stalls of Christ Church, Hampshire, of about 1528 (fig. 25), are most interesting



FIG. 25.—CHOIR STALLS, CHRIST CHURCH, HAMPSHIRE

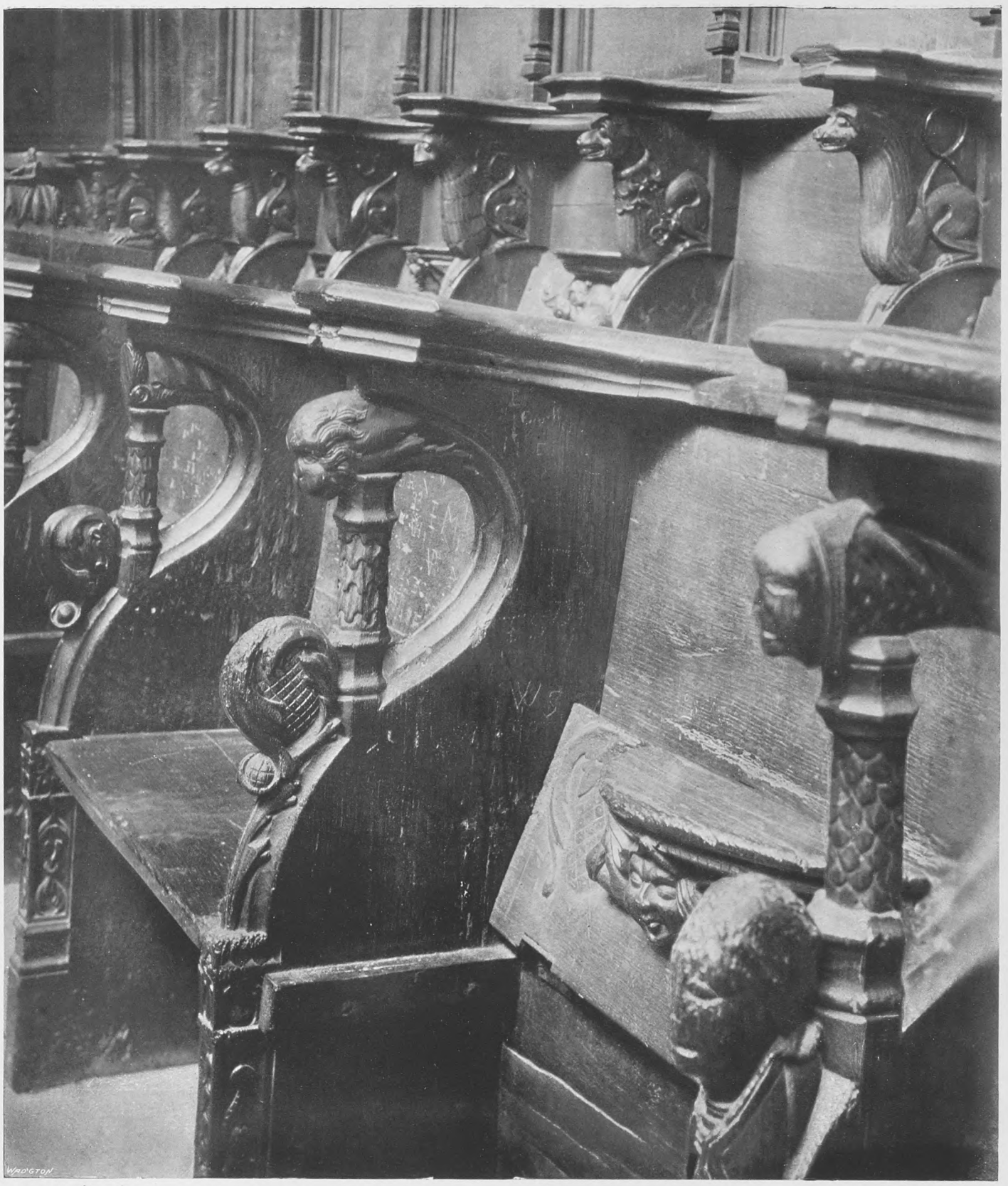


FIG. 26.—CHRIST CHURCH STALLS, LOWER TIER





FIGS. 27 *a* and *b*.—BRACKETS TO MISERERE SEATS, CHRIST CHURCH, HAMPSHIRE

to compare with those of Westminster. The divisions between the latter stalls are left solid, while in the lower tier of Christ Church the arms are supported on short columns, a method that was adopted a little later for all chairs with arms (fig. 26); these columns are supported by foliated scrolls, under which pilasters of Italian Renaissance design practically form the legs of the stall. The brackets to the miserere seats (figs. 27 *a*, *b*, and *c*), though coarse in execution, are full of spirit, and very significant of the changing taste. The arms of the upper tier are supported by boldly blocked-out animals in the form of dogs and gryphons (fig. 28). The panels forming the back, divided by buttressed styles of Gothic



FIG. 27 *c*.—BRACKETS TO MISERERE SEATS, CHRIST CHURCH, HAMPSHIRE

character, are headed at the top with eccentric devices in Renaissance design, here and there varied by the introduction of some in purely Gothic taste; above these spring a plain and ribbed canopy, finishing in a trellised balcony front, with pendants and finials all in the Gothic style. It will therefore be seen that no order has been preserved in the introduction of the two styles, and that the Gothic sentiment, which in these transitional examples is usually confined to the base of the structure, is here mingled throughout with that of the Renaissance. Fig. 29 shows some headings of the panels, which, although Italian in inspiration, are without any doubt English in execution. The third series of these stalls are those of King's



Fig 28.—DETAIL OF UPPER TIER, CHRIST CHURCH, HAMPSHIRE



Fig 29.—SIX PANEL-HEADINGS. CHOIR STALLS AT CHRIST CHURCH

College, Cambridge; and a portion of these, namely the rood-screen, with the complete stalls that are included in its construction, represent the only important example in this country of decorative Renaissance wood-work in its perfection. The most elaborate is the provost's stall (fig. 30); it is of double size, and resembles the high-backed state seats used in the Italian palaces. The back is carved with the subject of St. George and the dragon in medallion, surmounted by the figures of the gods, Mercury and Pluto; below this is the recumbent figure of a woman partially draped and with three children, one of which is being carried off by a lion; the whole panel is crowned by a representation of the Saviour giving a blessing. A most exquisite little frieze runs at the head of the seat, in the centre of which, on an escutcheon, is this monogram (fig. 31). The initials H. R. and R. A. occur continually and conspicuously in the decoration of the rood-screen and stalls, but only on this one small escutcheon and in one other place almost out of sight, is this other complex monogram to be found, which in English obviously reads 'Henry Rex . Anne . Jane Seymour .,' a grim and suggestive witticism on the part of the carver. The dais or canopy surmounting this and the next stalls is supported by balustered columns of Raphaelesque design, those to the provost's seat being carved. The newels to the reading-desk are headed by the Tudor greyhound and a lion couchant bearing a shield with the initials H. R. The front of this desk is a marvellous piece of joinery in panels which are three and a half inches below the face of the stiles and rails. The vice-provost's seat and adjacent stalls (fig. 32) resemble the others, but are simpler in their decoration. Fig. 33 is a view of the side stalls, which are in three tiers, the upper being of ordinary type, but with Renaissance mouldings; the canopy and supports are later seventeenth-century copies from the older portions. The oak throughout was artificially darkened in colour at the date of its erection, but it has never been varnished. There is but little doubt that the rood-screen and stalls were



Fig. 31

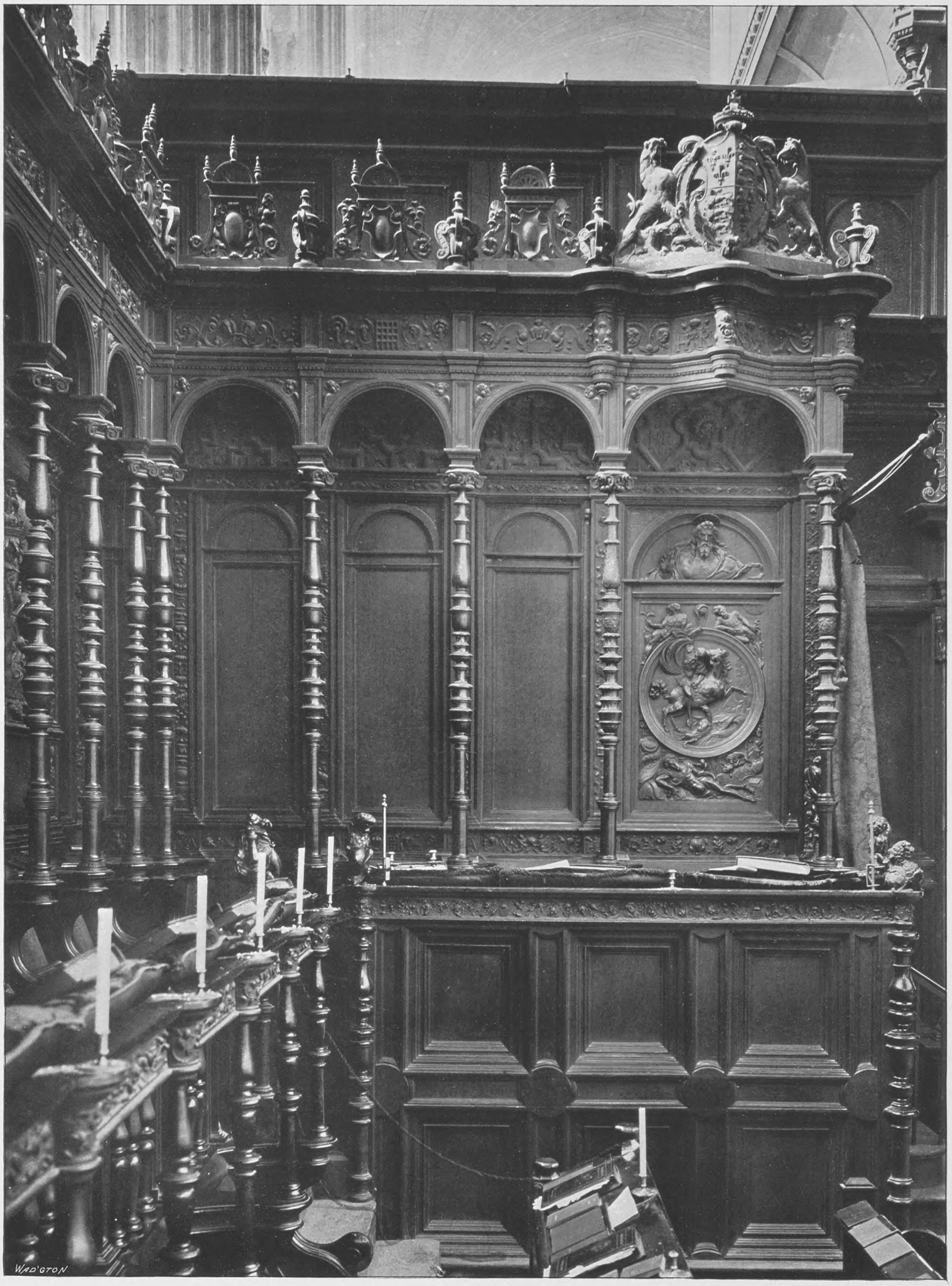


FIG. 30.—PROVOST'S STALL, KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL, CAMBRIDGE

designed by some great Italian master or by Holbein ; nothing on this subject is really known, though the date of their execution is proved by the perpetual introduction of the initials of Anne Boleyn with those of Henry, which, in his amorous exuberance, he insisted on having showered upon everything he commissioned at the time ; and there is every reason to suppose that the construction and much of the carving is of English workmanship, the more important and delicate parts having been left to Italian hands.

This standard of excellence, however, was found too high to be maintained ; and this furniture of King's College Chapel, which can hold its own with the finest examples of France and Italy, was mainly instrumental in dealing the final death-blow to Gothic taste in this country.

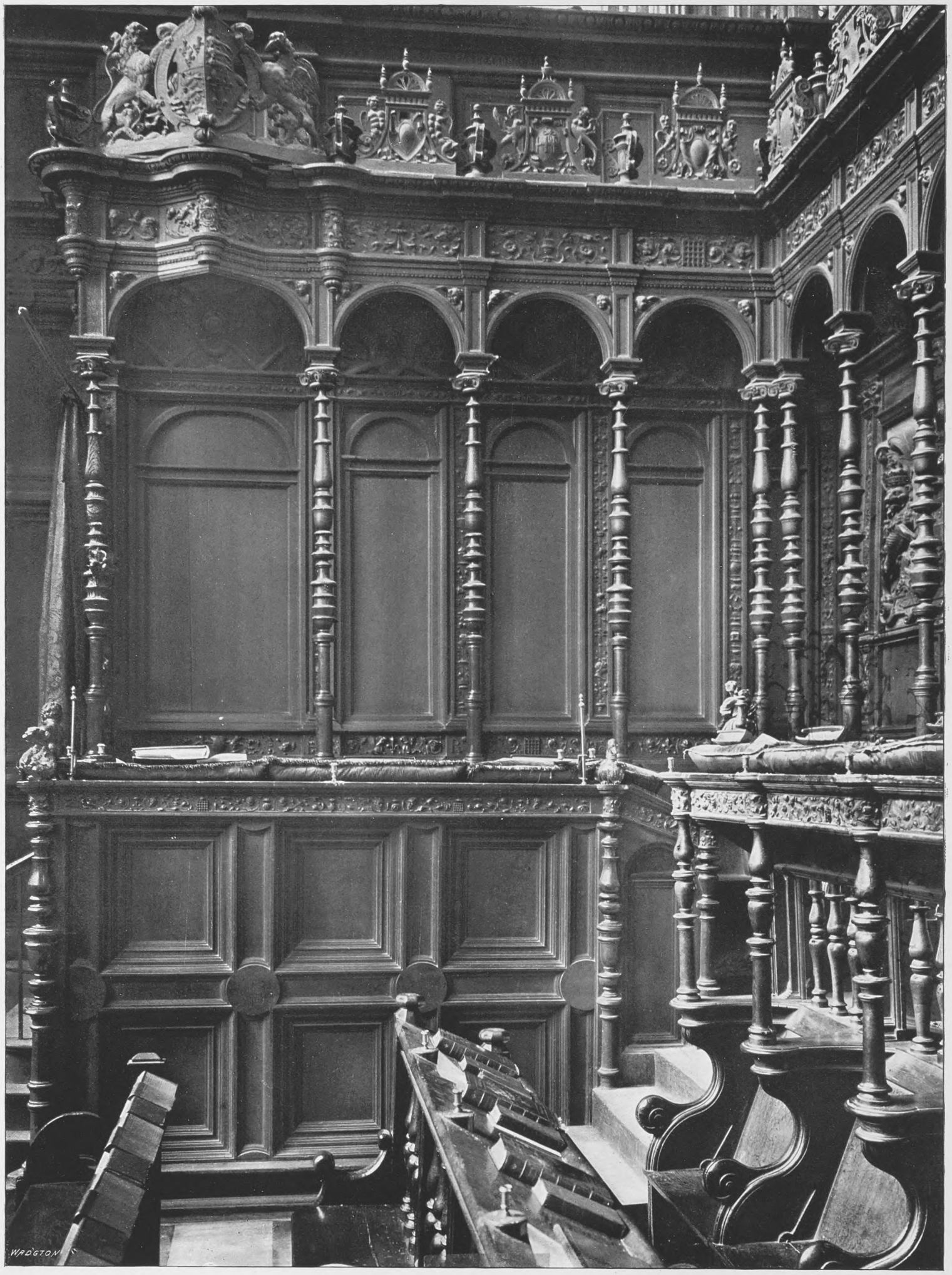


FIG. 32.—VICE-PROVOST'S SEAT AND ADJACENT STALLS, KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL, CAMBRIDGE

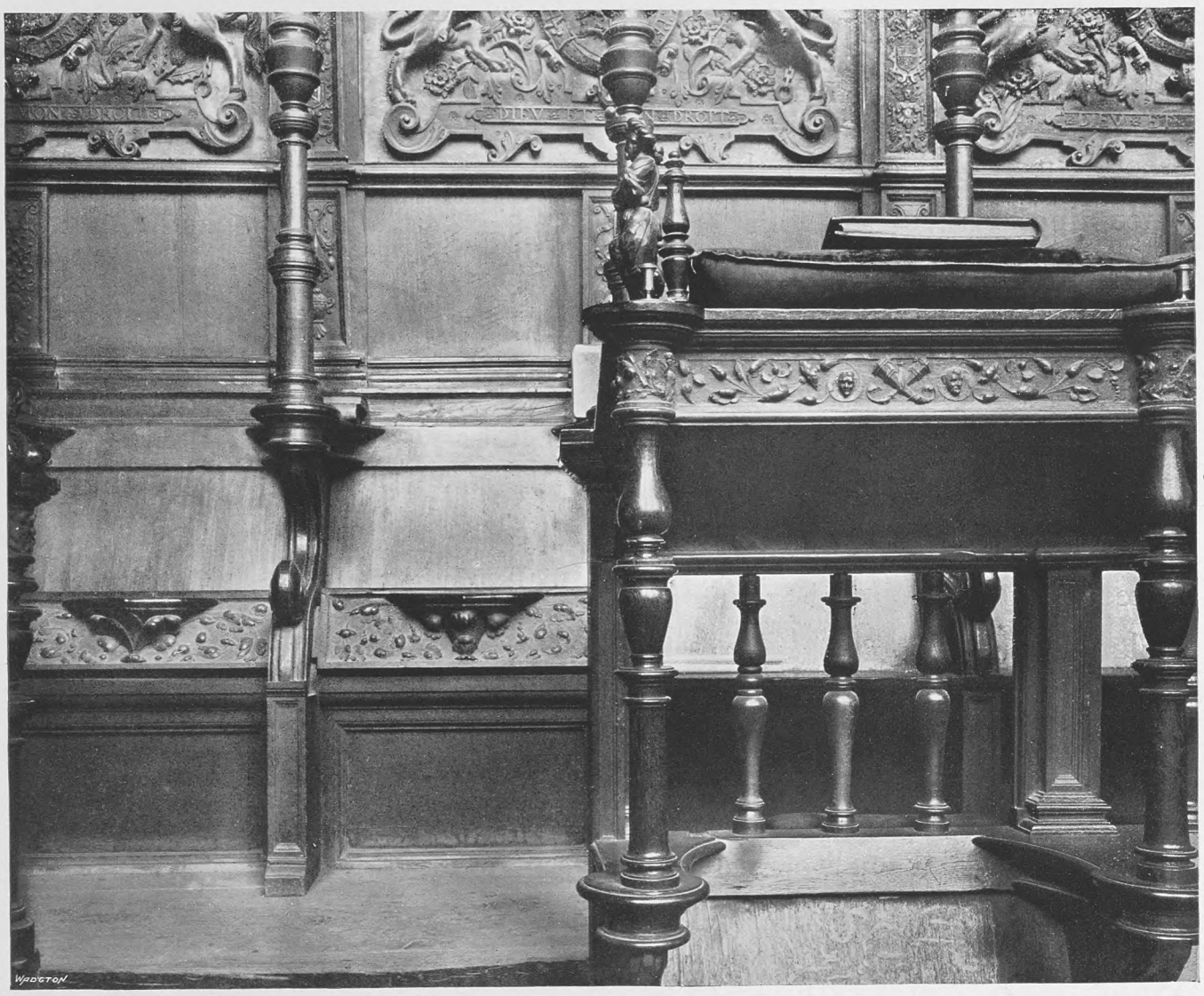


FIG. 33.—SIDE STALLS AND MISERERE SEATS, KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL, CAMBRIDGE

CHAPTER II

IN the buffet (Frontispiece) can be seen a distinct departure from the still traditional Gothic of the Westminster stalls. Next to the canopied seat, the credence or buffet occupied the most important place in the living-room. Originally formed by a chest or coffer mounted on a stand, it maintained the characteristics of this particular example throughout the fifteenth century; the cupboards were for the silver cups and wine-flagons, and when in use these were displayed on the top upon an embroidered linen cloth; the upper portion in many of the foreign examples was often elaborately carved, and surmounted by a low panelled

back with a canopy. This interesting buffet is of about the date 1520; the front is divided into three plain panels set in a series of fine reed mouldings and flats, such as are found on the French and Italian furniture of the same time, though the whole character of the piece is absolutely English in type; the top rail to the panels is formed of a cornice, roughly carved with a blunt and upright leaf-moulding, the stiles being delicately filled in with the trefoil arrangement generally found in the spandrels of Gothic tracery; the lower rail, in curious contrast to the upper, is composed of a Gothic twist; below this again come the late fifteenth-century cusped and perforated arches joining in a pendant. The columnar supports, in their scaled decoration and baluster form, suggest an Italian origin. It is to be observed that the moulding below the ground-shelf does not run through the legs or supports as in earlier times, but that it dies into the ground, framing a sort of barge boarding, on the centre of which is carved a small cross; the sides present a similar treatment to the front. The oak is light in colour, and cut when the sap was not in the wood. The discovery and preservation of this buffet is due to Mr. Seymour Lucas, who found it in the possession of a carpenter in a country town.

For the purposes of comparison, we give in fig. 34 a French walnut credence of about the same date; being foreign, and therefore more advanced in style, the Gothic sentiment has almost entirely disappeared, the panels being carved with pure Renaissance design.

A remarkable difference is to be observed between the front and sides of fig. 35, which is some ten or fifteen years later in date. The top of this standing cupboard is divided into two compartments; the front is quite plain, the doors being cut flush with the stiles and rails in the usual Gothic manner; these are bordered on either side by narrow upright panels, chamfered and bevelled on the outer and bottom rail and stiles. The cornice mouldings are of early Renaissance type; the uprights, on which the cupboard stands, are flat and coarse in their proportions, yet at the same time give great value to the rich tracery with which the side

panels are decorated; the lower of these has no finishing rail, and it would appear as if this piece of furniture must have occupied a position in which the sides were as much in evidence as the front. Quite close to the ground is a lower shelf with trayed edges, a very unusual feature; the irons at the side are modern additions; those on the door are original. The colour is dark, as the wood must have been varnished in Elizabethan times.



FIG 34.—FRENCH WALNUT CREDENCE. Property of Colonel GEORGE KEMP

ENGLISH FURNITURE

It may be well here to discuss the question of varnish. Furniture was not varnished in this country until the middle of the sixteenth century; wax-polish was no doubt used at times, or the wood slightly oiled, but Gothic oak and early Renaissance furniture were left untouched. As the forms of decoration became rounder, more ornamental, and as simplicity began to disappear, a deep coloured varnish was applied, or the wood was much oiled and then waxed; this oiling accounts for the great amount of dark furniture called black oak. The varnish used abroad was of extremely fine quality, and except for the admixture of colouring matter, probably very similar to that employed on the pictures and musical instruments. This varnish, with constant rubbing, gives the beautiful bronze-like patina of rich chestnut brown colour found on the later Renaissance furniture. Occasionally pieces are to be found which



FIG. 35.—OAK STANDING CUPBOARD.
Height, 4 feet 7 inches; width, 2 feet 8 inches; depth, 1 foot 6 inches.
Property of J. BARRY, Esq.

have been merely treated with wax-polish, and therefore have remained light in colour. The varnish employed in England was of coarser quality, and less beautiful in colour; nevertheless, after years of rubbing, the

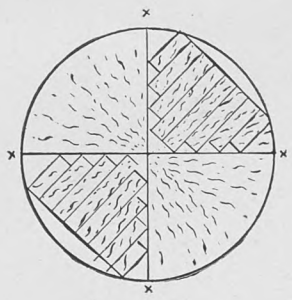


FIG. 36 *a*.

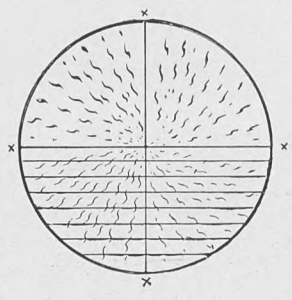


FIG. 36 *b*.

MANNER OF CUTTING OAK (SECTIONS)

surface presents a metallic appearance impossible to obtain in any other way. Beyond the fact that these varnishes were mixed with oil and not spirit, the secret of their composition is entirely lost, as it has been found impossible to obtain a correct chemical analysis of any old varnish. The original object in applying varnish or wax-polish to furniture was to preserve the wood.

What is called 'figure' in oak was obtained by cutting the wood in the manner of fig. 36 *a* as opposed to fig. 36 *b*. It is easy to see why wood cut in the former manner was extravagant, waste being entailed in the process. This so-called figure in wood has the appearance of hard diagonal splashes; these not being cellular, do not shrink with age like the rest. It is therefore a certain proof of the antiquity of a piece of oak when, on passing the hand over the surface, the figure appears to be slightly raised; if exposed to the air, unvarnished or merely waxed, it quickly assumes a darker colour than the rest, but if the oak is varnished, an opposite effect is the result. In fig. 42 the wood has never been darkened or varnished, and the figure splashes are clearly perceptible.

It is not until 1530 to 1535 that the marked change in the decoration of furniture caused by Italian influence really made itself felt. Examples of this invasion in style are easier to find in stone-work than in wood, but in the Christ Church stalls we have seen this transition very clearly taking

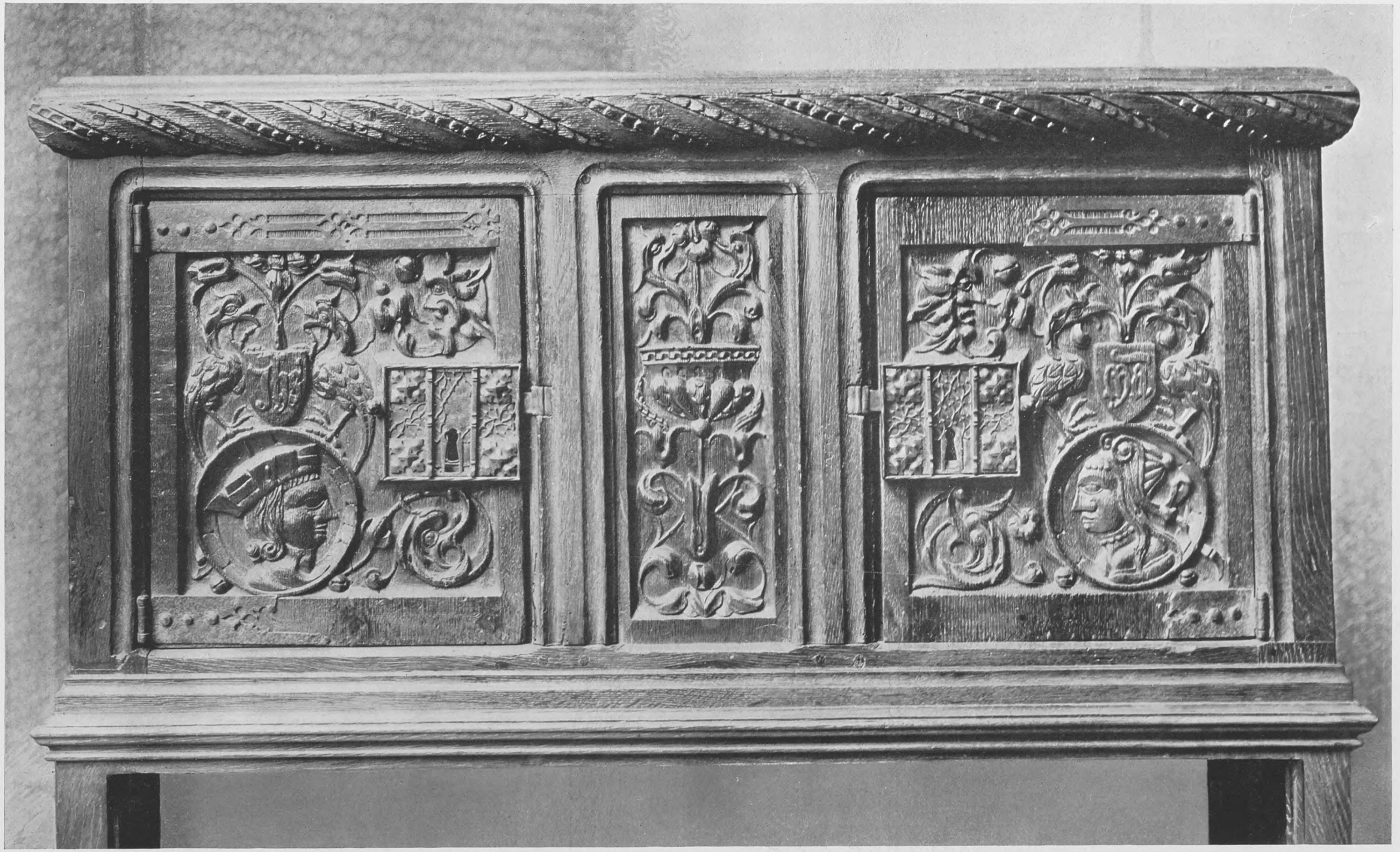


Fig 37.—UPPER PART OF AN OAK CREDENCE (BURGUNDIAN). Property of P. Macquoid, Esq.

Fig 37.—UPPER PART OF AN OAK CREDENCE (BURGUNDIAN). Property of P. Macquoid, Esq.



Fig. 38.—OAK HUTCH. Height, 3 feet; length, 4 feet 5 inches; depth, 1 foot 7 inches. Property of Morgan Williams, Esq.

place, while in the Continent this change had been established over twenty years. The top to a credence of about 1510 (fig. 37), of Burgundian workmanship, shows distinctly the admixture of the two styles ; the framework, the roping of the cornice, the gutter mouldings surrounding the panels and the lock-plates are entirely in the late Gothic taste, whereas the movement and grace in the floriated sprays on the panels, now fat now thin in execution, and the favourite introduction of a male and female head in medallion, all point to the incoming Italian taste. The medallions in this instance are lettered IHS and Ma, *i.e.* Jesus and Maria, showing that this very usual decoration, which deteriorated into representations of heads of Mars and Venus, and later into portraits of the lord and lady of the house, was originally of religious intention. These new ideas and designs had by 1535 penetrated into every part of England, but in the country Gothic still continued to be introduced in conjunction with such examples of Italian ornament as the craftsman had the opportunity of studying. Fig. 38, of the date 1525, is a hutch or low-standing cupboard in which Renaissance and Gothic sentiment are very equally represented. The heads in medallion that form the doors are in the new taste, while the other panel and those that form the front of the drawers are filled with a well-designed Gothic tracery, perforated for the purposes of ventilation. The arrangement of the little carved spandrels above and below the lock-plates is also Gothic, but the two styles are kept totally distinct, and do not affect one another. The sides are carved with a linenfold pattern, and the whole piece is in admirable preservation.

In fig. 39, a double hutch made in the Eastern Counties, a different motive of construction and decoration is apparent. In this instance the usual heads are replaced by a mullet, the cognisance of the De Veres, and the cornice moulding takes the form of an engrailed cresting. But in reviewing the early oak furniture of country make, it is clear that it possesses no real excellence of workmanship, and only the great charm of simplicity and proportion. This is exemplified very strongly by the

buffet given on Plate III., a piece that possesses interest from its heraldic decorations. It was made for John Wynne in 1535, who built Gwydyr Castle at that date, and from which place it has never since been moved. The construction is Gothic, being surmounted by a canopy or dais, the base of which has at one time been cut and reduced. The lower portion opens in three cupboards and two drawers, decorated with armorial bearings and emblems of the Wynne family. The upper right panel bears the arms of John Wynne: Quarterly, 1st and 4th sable, a chevron between three fleur-de-lys argent (Tervan ap Howell, 1399);

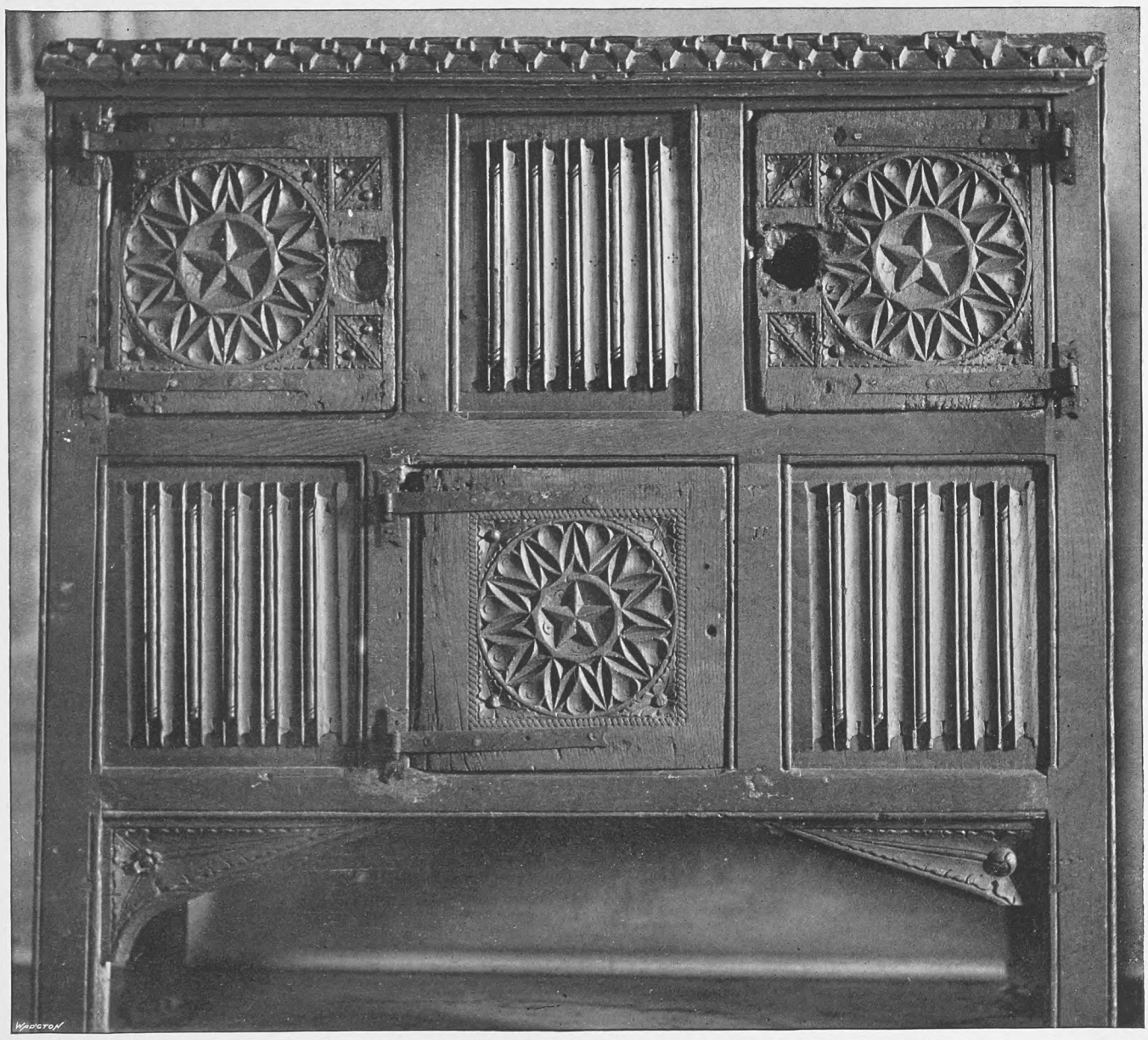
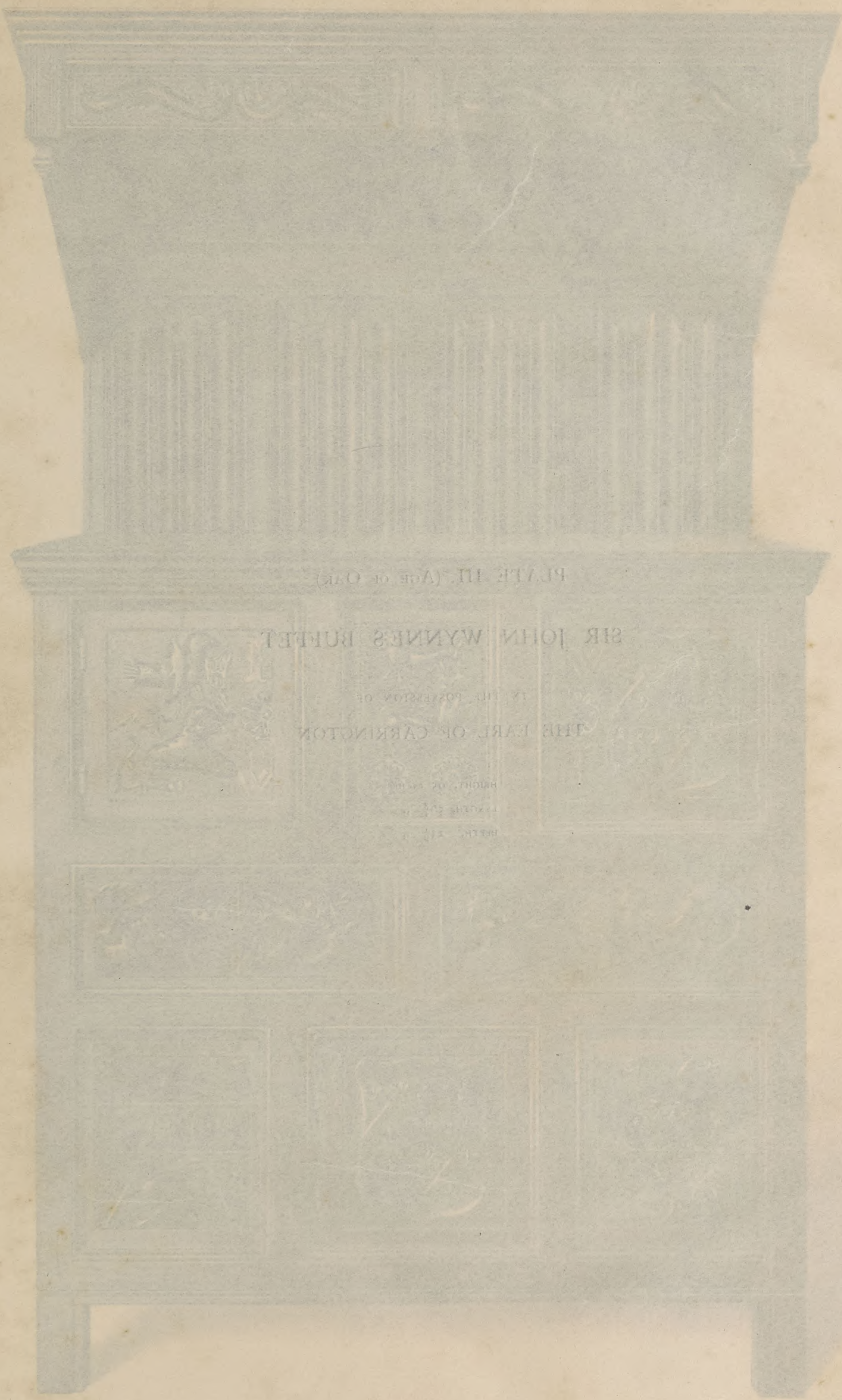


FIG. 39.—OAK DOUBLE HUTCH. Property of J. H. A. MAJENDIE, Esq.

2nd and 3rd vert, three eagles displayed in fesse or (Owen Gwynedd, 1169), at the side of which is the so-called leek flower and the initials I. W. The centre panel bears the two roval lions of England crowned passant, above the York and Lancaster Rose, the Wynnes being connected by marriage with the royal House of Tudor. The third panel to the left bears a helm with an eagle rising as crest, with the leek flower and I. W.



FIG. 40.—OAK COURT CUPBOARD. Height, 5 feet 7 inches; width, 5 feet; depth, 1 foot 9 inches. Property of Sir CHARLES LAWES-WITTEWRONGE, Bart.



2nd and 3rd vert, three eagles displayed in fesse or (Owen Gwynedd, 1169), at the side of which is the so-called leek flower and the initials I. W. The centre panel bears the two royal lions of England crowned passant, above the York and Lancaster Rose, the Wynnes being connected by marriage with the royal House of Tudor. The third panel to the left bears a helm with an eagle rising as crest, with the leek flower and I. W.

PLATE III (AGE OF OAK)

SIR JOHN WYNNE'S BUFFET

IN THE POSSESSION OF

THE EARL OF CARRINGTON

HEIGHT, 95 INCHES
LENGTH, $56\frac{3}{4}$ „
DEPTH, $23\frac{1}{2}$ „

FIG. 40.—OAK COURT CUPBOARD. Height, 5 feet 7 inches; width, 5 feet; depth, 1 foot 9 inches. Property of Sir CHARLES LAWES-WITTEWRONGE, Bart.



Shirley Slocombe

repeated; the right-hand drawer of the middle compartment bears the Royal Red Dragon of Cadwaladr, the last king of Britain, and a head couped in profile, the other two heads being on the corresponding drawer, this being an allusion to the story that during the reign of Llewelyn the Great, Vychan, in the year 1246, defeated the English army who invaded Wales, and having killed three of the principal English officers, brought their heads to the prince, who directed Vychan to bear the arms Three Englishmen's heads couped and proper. On the other panels are the arms of Sorwerth (father of Llewelyn) and his brother Roderic, ancestors of the



FIG. 41.—OAK PANELLING FROM A HOUSE AT WALTHAM. VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM

Wynnes ; the arms of John Wynne being again repeated between them. The sides are carved with fine linenfold, which pattern also forms the decoration of the back and soffit of the canopy, the front panels of the latter being carved with the dragon, the royal cognisance of Wales.

The standing, or court cupboard, as it is sometimes called, fig. 40, is a far more ambitious attempt in art than the preceding specimens, and also inaugurates a new method of construction. The upper portion opens with three doors carved with male and female heroic heads in strapped and laurelled circles, much resembling in treatment the well-known run of panelling (fig. 41) of the same period, taken from an old house at Waltham. Above the medallions on the cupboard doors is a double dolphin design, varied in one instance by a cherub's head, supporting in its mouth a ball and tassel chord ; here the English workmanship is most apparent ; the lower portion opens with two doors, each containing four panels, decorated in a similar manner, and the wide centre rail gives great dignity to the surrounding proportions. The whole piece is a deliberate English copy of a foreign cupboard of somewhat earlier date. In both this and the Waltham panelling it is evident that the carver, although dexterous, was trying his hand at something to which he was unaccustomed. Mr. Seymour Lucas discovered the cupboard in a cottage near Oxford Castle, Kent, his belief being that it came from the castle, which was originally a bishop's palace ; the cottage belonged to quite a poor woman, who could not sell the piece of furniture for some time, as an elder brother claimed a joint interest in it. Both this and fig. 42 are approximately of the same date, 1530; and although the difference of treatment is very marked, it is but the difference of French and Flemish influence on the mind of an English workman, and the difficulty of assigning exact dates is obviously much increased by these contemporary divergences in style. It is divided into two rows of panels, set in a deep and well-considered series of fillet and flat mouldings ; the portrait busts are in very high relief, cut from the solid, with the exception of the faces, for which an extra half-

inch of oak has been added ; the noses have perished, and give an appearance of age and ugliness to these faces which the healthy developments in the rest of the young woman contradict. The Lombardic letters A. W. on either side of the tun or barrel that are carved on the upper panel of the door accord exactly with the date of the costumes ; the mouldings of the cornice, those round the door and the butts to the hinges without flanges, betoken the coming change. Though somewhat rude in construction, the proportions of this piece are well considered, and the strong markings of the figure in the wood adds much to its decoration ; in all probability too the lower half, which is missing, possessed features of interest. In 1525 Sir Richard Weston, Under-Treasurer to the King, built Sutton Place, near Guildford, and introduced into the decorations a tun or barrel as a play upon his name, a very usual custom in those days. In 1530 he married his son Francis to his ward Ann, daughter and heiress of Christopher



FIG. 42.—UPPER PART OF AN OAK STANDING CUPBOARD. Property of J. BARRY, Esq.



FIG. 43.—OAK PANELS. Property of H. A. TIPPING, Esq.

Pickering, and there can be but little doubt that this interesting cupboard was once the property of Ann Weston, and probably given to her on her marriage, as the initials A. W. and the two portraits, evidently of husband



FIG. 44.—OAK GAME TABLE. Height, 2 feet 8½ inches; length, 3 feet. Lord DE LISLE AND DUDLEY

and wife, would imply that it was a marriage gift, and the whole piece exactly corresponds with the date of the marriage. This young Sir Francis Weston was, in 1536, six years after his marriage, tried and executed as one of the lovers of the unfortunate Anne Boleyn. Though perhaps irrelevant matter in a work on furniture, the following extract from Paul Friedman's *Life of Anne Boleyn* may interest the reader as showing what evidence there was against Ann Weston's husband; but it is just these personal and historical links that add so vastly to the interest and possession of any specimen :—

'On the 23rd April 1536 the Queen had some private talk with Sir Francis Weston, and upbraided him for making love to Margaret Skelton, her cousin, and for not loving his wife. The young man, knowing the Queen's appetite for flattery, answered that he loved some one in her own house more than either his wife or Margaret Skelton. Anne eagerly asked who it was, and he replied, "It is yourself." She affected to be angry and rebuked him for his boldness; but the reprimand cannot have been very terrible, for Weston continued his talk, and told her that Noreys also came to her chamber, more for her sake than that of Madge, as Margaret Skelton was called. Three weeks after this conversation Sir Francis Weston met his death on Tower Hill. In his speech from the scaffold he said: "I had thought to live in abomination yet this twenty or thirty years and then to have made amends; I little thought I would have come to this." He also left the following letter, the original of which is at the Record Office: "Father, mother, and wyfe, I shall humbly desyre you for the salvacyon of my sowle to dyschardge me of all my offences that I have done to you, and in especyall my wyfe, whiche I desyre for the love of God to forgyve me and to pray for me, for I beleve prayer wyll do me good. Goddy's blessyng have my chyldrene and meyne, by me a great offender to God." The widow, Ann Weston, made two subsequent marriages, and died in the year 1582.'

Another form of decorating panels of furniture at this time was by cutting out the ground, leaving the rest of the surface for the design; the sunk ground was then filled in with hard coloured composition. The panels (fig. 43) are either from the top of a long armoire or from the overdoors and overmantel of a room. They were made for Sir William Kingston, Constable of the Tower, who was the gaoler of both Anne Boleyn and Weston. He was created Knight of the Garter, April 24, 1539, and died in 1540, so their date is conclusively fixed by the

panel, unfortunately mutilated, bearing his arms, within a garter, Quarterly, 1st and 4th azure, a cross between four leopards' faces argent; 2nd and 3rd ermines, a chevron and in chief a leopard's face. The other arms are those of Lady Kingston, and the remaining panels of this series are decorated with heroic heads and scrolls of conventional ornament. It was solely through the report made by this Sir William Kingston to Cromwell of what Anne Boleyn had during her captivity told Lady Kingston in confidence, that young Sir Francis Weston first became implicated. Fig. 44 is a little gaming or card table; it is rough in execution, and was probably made about 1535. The top opens in two leaves, supported and kept in position by sliding bars; the frame forms a shallow cupboard, in which the cards, chessmen, etc., were kept; the panels are carved with medallioned heads and conventional ornament. A plain shelf, supported on the lion's feet, connects the legs, which are quadrangular and carved with rough acanthus; the whole construction is distinctly Gothic in character. These small gaming-tables were made for the ladies of the house, who at that period were much addicted to cards and other games of chance; they are sometimes found with the tops marked for chess or tric-trac. Mary Tudor, during the time of her semi-captivity, spent much of her time and her meagre allowance of money in gambling. A similar table is to be seen in the Long Gallery at Hardwick, but the original flap is missing, and some extra shelves have been added.

It has not been thought necessary to point out every individual instance of repair to some of these early specimens. Genuine restorations are often absolutely necessary to prevent very old pieces of furniture from falling into decay, and many of the slight repairs which are clearly visible in the illustrations are of early date, and go to prove that care and interest were taken in the furniture.

CHAPTER III

EARLY chairs of English manufacture are extremely rare; the word itself is derived from the Old French *chayre*, *cheyre*, or *cayre*. In Gothic and even later times they fulfilled no common office as they do to-day, but were personal to the Lord and Lady, or Master and Mistress of the house, and were individually as important to them as their silver cups and spoons. The chair originally was probably only devoted to the use of the owner, and carved with his or her initials or some emblem. The number of chairs in use throughout the fifteenth and greater part of the sixteenth centuries cannot have been many; settles, benches, stools, and the tops of chests were the most ordinary form of seat, and that the occupation of a chair conferred a considerable amount of authority and caste, is certain. In addition to the personal chairs in a room, it is probable that one or two others were introduced for important guests. One of the first forms was that of a shallow 'X,' much on the principle of the modern campstool, the upper extremities receiving the rails that formed the arms, and the band that formed the back. The simple excellence of this construction is at once apparent; but when plate armour in addition to the existing mail was worn, the weight of a seated man became so great that a chair of more solid build was found necessary, and we find in the miniatures of the fifteenth century that the principal seat is of box-like form with panelled back and arms; indeed it will be seen that, throughout the whole historical evolution of the chair, the shape was practically governed by the changes that took place in costume. All early chairs had arms to support the heavy hanging sleeves that were in vogue, and would have been much the same in form as the fine state seat of 1460, at St. Mary's,

Coventry, though this can hardly be termed a chair, having once formed part of a series of stalls fixed to a wall. Fig. 45 is a specimen of this solid type, which dates towards the end of the fifteenth century. The seat forms the lid of a box, and has the original flanged hinges; the front, sides, and panels to the arms are carved with a decorated linenfold pattern, the uprights in front terminating in finials; the back is panelled with Gothic tracery, which may possibly have been cut down from an original height of four panels, but the alteration, if it took place, must have occurred soon after the chair was made; the oak is unusually light in colour, having



FIG. 45.—OAK CHAIR, PROBABLY FLEMISH. Property of PERCY MACQUOID, Esq.

never been oiled or varnished. This chair, though exactly resembling the type made in England, is probably Flemish. For decoration, a large piece of rich material was often thrown over this form of chair, completely covering it, and frequently supplemented by loose cushions; it was not until the introduction of the lighter shapes that stuffs commenced to be nailed to the wood.

This solid form of chair continued to be made well into the sixteenth century, the panels being decorated in the same manner as other contemporary furniture, with medallioned heads surmounted by conventional ornament in the Italian manner, and which in this country obtained the name of 'Romayne Work.' Fig. 46 is an English chair decorated with this work, the structure being an evolution from the Gothic type of the previous example, but the linenfold is confined to the back and sides. In the lighter forms of chair that began to make their appearance in 1530, the 'X' shape was again revived. The chair in the sacristy of York Cathedral (fig. 47) is of this description and period, though an earlier date has frequently been assigned to it. The top extremities finish with embossed metal caps originally gilt, and the whole of the wood-work was left in the rough, showing that it was intended to be covered with material; the back was hung from the spring of the arms to the top with velvet strained on leather, on which was embroidered the arms and cognizances of the owner, and up to 1836 traces of this embroidery still existed. This is the earliest known example of an English upholstered chair. In the portrait of Mary Tudor, Queen of England, by Sir Antonio Moro, she is represented as sitting in a very similar seat. Another chair of this style is (fig. 48) preserved in Winchester Cathedral, as the seat on the occasion of her marriage with Philip. It is somewhat coarse in form and probably of country make; the two straps at the back show the original foundation on which the piece of embroidered velvet was strained. The Queen travelled to Winchester to receive Philip, who landed at Southampton, and the



FIG. 46.—OAK CHAIR. Date 1535. Height, 4 feet 2 inches; width, 2 feet 1 inch. Property of MRS. BLOOD

marriage took place in the Cathedral on July 25, 1554; the date of the chair, however, precedes that of the marriage by a few years. It is a very common error to assign all these 'X' chairs to foreign importation, but Henry VIII. had gathered together in this country a small army of French, German, Italian, Flemish, and English artificers, with the great artist Holbein, and the architects John of Padua and Antonio Toto del Nunziata at their head, to work on the remarkable building, Nonesuch, that he, the Nebuchadnezzar of the time, was about to set up. Fig. 49 is probably one of a series of 'X' chairs mentioned in a royal inventory of the King's effects, and designed by one of the foreign artists employed on the building. It is of walnut, the curves of the limbs justifying the employment of this wood, which, though universal in France and Italy, was not generally used for furniture here. By tradition, this particular chair was given by Henry VIII. to a relation of Anne Boleyn's as a marriage gift, and remained in the possession of the family until 1896. The lines of this chair have a strong Italian feeling, but the carving is without the finish of the foreign craftsman, and the wood is English walnut, light in colour; the parts in relief have been re-gilt, and the leather of the seat and back is comparatively recent. Fig. 50 is another and rather smaller example of this same type; it is also of walnut, and the carving, which is distinctly English, very much resembles in touch that of the preceding chair. The arms are slighter and curve more rapidly upwards, terminating at the top in two ringed knobs; the front, which breaks at its lower extremities into coarsely scrolled crescents, is carved with figures of marine monsters, the centre boss being formed of a boldly carved lion's mask; the leather of the seat and back are not contemporary.

Another movable form of chair very popular at this time in France was that known as a *cacqueteuse* (conversational) or *chaise de femme*, after the manner of fig. 51, but comparatively few were made here. Plate IV. (*a*) is a cacqueteuse of Devonshire make, found recently in the village of Colyton, and is a very good example of the better class work of

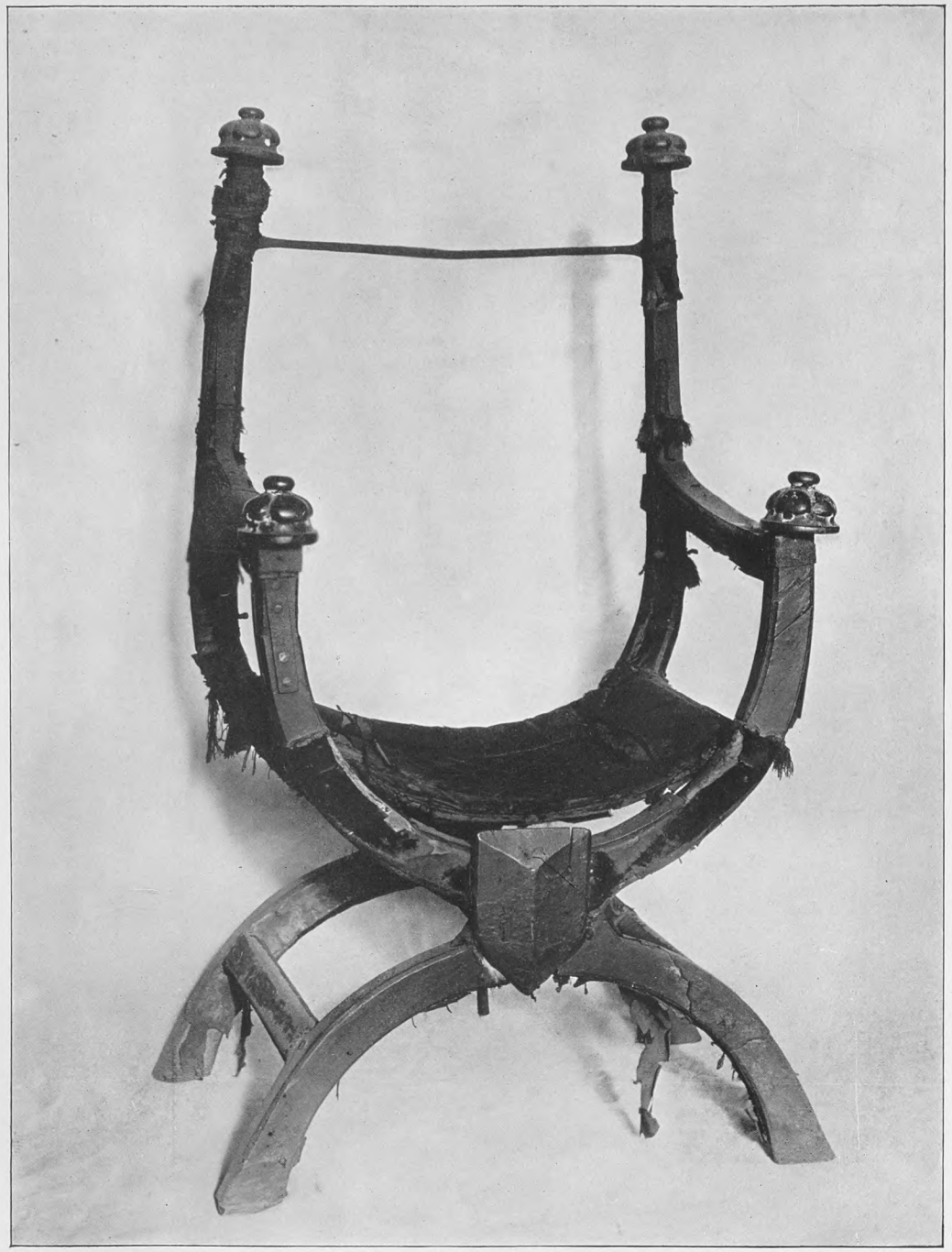


FIG. 47.—CHAIR IN SACRISTY OF YORK CATHEDRAL. Height, 4 feet

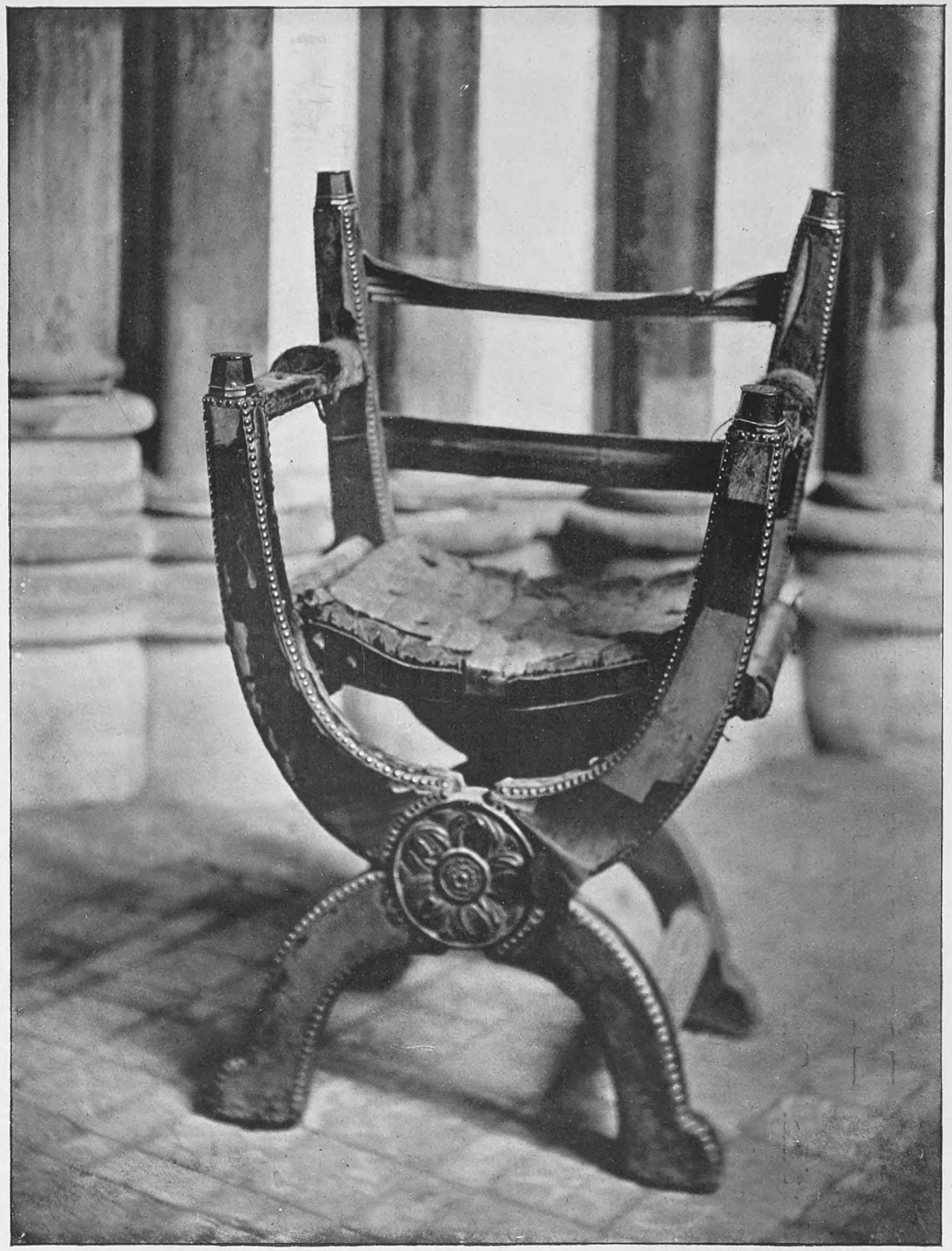


FIG. 48.—OAK CHAIR, WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL. Height, 3 feet 1 inch

the time. The back is tall, slightly fan-shaped, and contains a panel boldly carved with a female bust in the costume of 1535; this portrait is set in lozenge, the heraldic attribute of a woman, and is surmounted and supported by dolphin-shaped scrolls and conventional ornament, terminating at the base in cherubs, all carved in high relief; the arms have angular elbows supported by extra uprights, finishing below the seat in small Gothic pendants. Fig. 52 is the side view of this chair. The upper and under surface of the arms correspond in their shallow but broad mouldings; the seat follows the line of the arms, and its front rail on the lower side is ogeed and cusped; the legs are rectangular, and kept in their position



FIG. 49.—WALNUT CHAIR. Property of ALFRED DE PASS, Esq.



(1) ARM CHAIR

BEAUTIFULLY CARVED IN OAK)



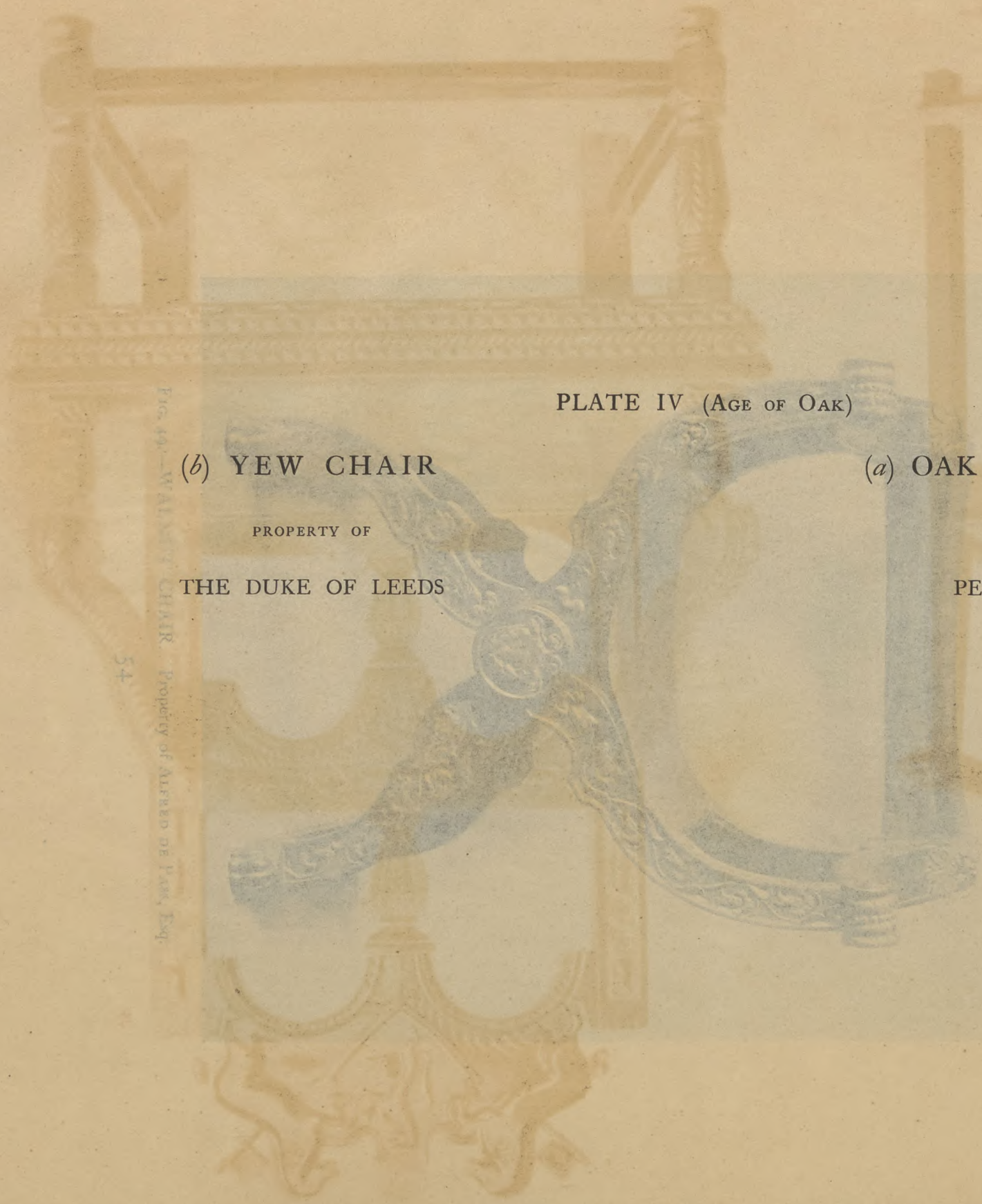
(2) OAK CACQUETTE CHAIR

PLATE IV (AGE OF OAK)

(*b*) YEW CHAIR

PROPERTY OF

THE DUKE OF LEEDS



(*a*) OAK CACQUETEUSE CHAIR

PROPERTY OF

PERCY MACQUOID, Esq.

Stanley Stevens







by a broad front rail, an extremely short back rail, and one stretcher. Its preservation is owing to the many coats of black paint with which it was covered; at the back are the initials I. S. in Lombardic letters. As in all Devonshire work, the colour of the oak is very dark. The other chair (*b*), also given on Plate IV., is from Hornby Castle, the date about 1550. It is made of yew, which adds to its rarity, for up to this time it was practically penal to employ yew-wood for any other purpose than the manufacture of the national weapon; in this instance the wood has become close, hard as steel, and of a beautiful dark amber colour. The design of the back is open work, formed of a double arcade supported on vase-shaped balusters, and the detail of the carving foreshadows that English branch of the Renaissance, later called Elizabethan. Surmounting the chair as a cresting is a coat of arms bearing a lion rampant, with a Tudor rose as a crest, and unicorns backed by pennants as supporters; on the pennants are the initials C. A. in Lombardic and cusped letters. The front of the seat rail is deeply carved with a rich twist between raised diamond-shaped plaques, the seat itself is of oak, the arms are flattened and carved on the upper surface, like those of all early chairs of this type, unless they are inlaid; the back is almost straight, and the whole chair has a barbarous sense of richness and importance.



FIG. 50.—WALNUT CHAIR
Property of SIR GEORGE DONALDSON

ENGLISH FURNITURE

During the latter part of the reign of Henry VIII., chest fronts partook of the character of that shown in fig. 53, where the medallion heads have disappeared, giving place to a more spreading decoration of floriated scroll-work with less repetition. In this instance the peg holes for fixing the Gothic mouldings top and bottom are visible, and on the reverse of the front are the grooves to hold the bottom and side panels, proving its original construction as a chest.



FIG. 51.—WALNUT CACQUETEUSE CHAIR (FRENCH)
Property of COLONEL GEORGE KEMP

Leather-covered chests studded with nails were also used in rooms at this time for furniture as well as for the purposes of travelling. Fig. 54 is an interesting specimen belonging once to Queen Katherine Parr. Having safely outlived her third husband, Henry VIII., she was emboldened immediately to take a fourth, Lord Edward Seymour, brother to the Protector, to whose descendants the chest still belongs. It is of a light wood covered with cow-hide, studded with brass-headed nails in three sizes. On the top (fig. 55) is a Tudor crown surmounting the letters K. R.

(Katherine Regina), with sprays of lilies at the corners. The front opens at the bottom with two drawers, and is covered with an elaborate nail-heading design, into which bunches of grapes are introduced. The clamps, lock-plates, key, and small handles are of iron, and all original. In tracing the evolution of any particular taste and style, it is always difficult to account for sudden change, unless accompanied by some events such as political alterations in government, or a simultaneous growth of original ideas, emanating from men of genius. The change that came into furniture and its decoration after the death of Henry VIII. in 1547 can be attributed to a combination of these causes; also the occupation of the throne by two women in succession, wielding almost absolute power, brought about an amelioration of manners and a hitherto unknown appreciation of domestic comfort, the unsettled reign of Edward VI. being of too brief duration to encourage any noticeable varieties of style. The temporal and artistic powers of Italy were by the middle of the sixteenth century well on



FIG. 52.—SIDE VIEW OF ENGLISH CACQUETEUSE CHAIR. Oak. Height, 4 feet; width, 1 foot 10 inches. Property of PERCY MACQUOID, Esq.

their decline; but the art that had poured into England from this source had educated the craftsman to a point that rendered him capable of designing and executing work that could be dignified as both national and distinctive. It is out of this new-born English instinct for originality, grafting itself on to the hard-and-fast lines of classical design, that the style known as Elizabethan sprang into existence. This style, though wanting in simplicity, and often at fault in the arrangement of its heterogeneous ornament, possesses a sense of domesticity and refinement hitherto lacking in the houses and furniture of this country. Sympathy and tolerance for the new religion induced many Flemish and French Huguenots to settle over here permanently (the foreign workmen up to this time having been but birds of passage), and by intermarriage a higher technical skill and truer artistic insight became an inheritance of the Englishman. Literature, through the medium of printing, had begun to create a national school



FIG. 53.—CHEST FRONT. Oak. Height, 2 feet 4 inches; length, 4 feet. Property of MESSRS. MORANT & CO.

with a very direct and enlightening influence on the manners, entertainments, and life of the people, and as a natural consequence, the barbaric superfluity, that had hitherto existed among the rich, gave place gradually to a desire for elegance and necessary comforts.

Up to 1550 all inn accommodation was extremely archaic, for till then it was customary for travellers to bring with them their solid provisions and often their feather-beds; all they expected to find at an inn was an indifferent bed, ale, and wine. A far more refined state of things is indicated in a diary kept by a Dutch physician, Levinus Lemnius, during his travels in England at the commencement of Elizabeth's reign, and translated into English in 1576 :—

'The neate cleanlines, the exquisite finenesse, the pleasaunte and delightful furniture in evry poynt for household, wonderfully rejoysed mee, their nosegayes finely entermingled wyth sundry sortes of fragraunte floures in their bedchambers and privy roomes with comfortable smell cheered mee up and entirely delygted all my sences.'



FIG. 54.—LEATHER-COVERED CHEST FORMERLY BELONGING TO QUEEN KATHERINE PARR. Property of CHARLES R. SEYMOUR, Esq.

And in an English-Dutch dialogue book for travellers of about the same time, the directions for addressing a chambermaid are as follows:—

'TRAVELLER. My shee frinde, is my bed made, is it good?

'CHAMBERMAID. Yea sir, it is a good feder bed, the scheetes be very cleane.

'TRAVELLER. Pull off my hosen and warme my bedde, drawe the curtines and pin them with a pinne. My shee frinde kisse me once and I shall sleape the better. I thanke you, faire mayden.'

Travelling even for the rich was, however, a very serious business. Elizabeth and her Court accomplished their journeys on horseback and in litters, for no kind of light travelling carriage existed in England, and the furniture and personal luggage that accompanied a royal progress often required the employment of six hundred two-wheeled wagons, each drawn by six horses. Civilised society, as we understand it, had nevertheless begun, and smaller houses, designed on the lines of Hampton Court and Nonesuch, sprang up in different parts of the country. Such houses were unfortified in character, their internal plan and arrangements conforming to domestic comforts and requirements. This new growth of luxury was



FIG. 55.—TOP OF CHEST FORMERLY BELONGING TO QUEEN KATHERINE PARR

PLATE V (AGE OF OAK)

CABINET INLAID WITH MARQUETERIE

HEIGHT, 3 FEET
LENGTH, 3 „ 6 INCHES
DEPTH, 1 FOOT 5 „

PROPERTY OF
SIR GEORGE DONALDSON

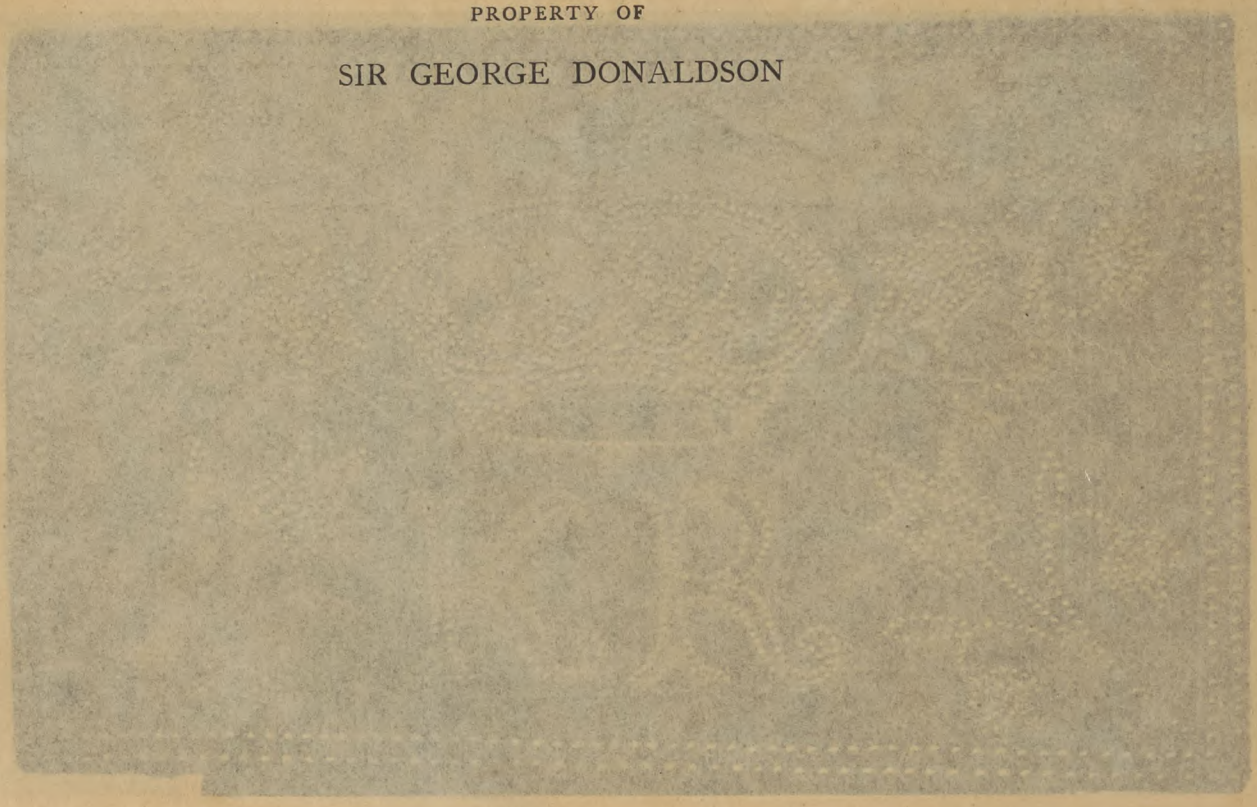


FIG. 55.—TOP OF CHEST FORMERLY BELONGING TO QUEEN KATHERINE PARR



greatly encouraged by a revival of prosperity in trade, which the Wars of the Roses, followed by years of religious controversy, had reduced to so low an ebb; but with the creation of the great merchant companies, who opened up trade with the Baltic, Turkey, Syria, and Asia Minor, and the consequent increase of silver specie, which after 1560 poured into this country, a plutocracy was created whose position was quickly recognised, and on whom distinctions were conferred by those in power. This sudden influx of wealth created a certain antagonism between these new rich men and the old-established families, who had hitherto been the only patrons of architecture and furniture, and each tried to go one better than the other; this accounts to some extent for that variety and picturesqueness, which, although chaotic in the redundance of its ornament as a style, and often lacking in true principle, rarely fails in giving richness of effect and individual importance.

The characteristics of the decoration of Elizabethan furniture are a lack of finish in the carving, which usually represents arabesques and strap-work, in combination with figures of human beings, masks, fruit, and grotesque animals, all being without the consecutive motive and preciseness of the foreign masters of the same period. These details are varied on the flat surfaces by the introduction of inlaid, coloured, and stained woods, a form of decoration that soon became extremely popular.

The writing-cabinet (Plate v.) is an example of early marqueterie made in this country by an exceptionally talented craftsman, working out the advantages he had received from association with foreigners and their methods; the small and rather fanciful detail of the inlay, which is additionally decorated with painted lines, suggests a period between 1550 and 1560. Writing-cabinets of this construction originated in Italy; the pattern travelled from there to Spain, where it became universal. It is probable that in this instance the inspiration was Spanish, and that its prototype came over in connection with Philip. The flap is inlaid in four panels in a border of rose-wood and other coloured and stained woods; the



Fig. 56.—CABINET OPEN. Height, 3 feet; length, 3 feet 6 inches; depth, 1 foot 5 inches. Property of Sir George Donaldson.

designs take the form of most delicate floral sprays, springing from vases and baskets; these vases terminate in the head and breasts of a woman, hooded with the cap of 1550, the lip of the vase ingeniously forming the high collar of that date. The rocket-like lines burst into gillyflowers, of divers colours, amongst which birds perch, and below are dogs pursuing rabbits; on two of the panels is a representation of the Tudor rose in the form of an escutcheon, with centres composed of red cedar. Below the flap is one drawer on which the same motive is repeated. The inside of the cabinet, shown in fig. 56, opens in twelve drawers, their fronts inlaid with the same elegant floriated sprays, in each case springing from a basket. The sides are inlaid with alternate bands of English walnut and rose-wood; the frame and finely reeded Renaissance mouldings to the drawers are of walnut; the whole of the internal structure being of English oak. The lock-plate is a perfect example of our iron-work of the time; formed of three balustered columns, one of which forms the hasp (an idea again borrowed from the Spanish taste); these are supported by a strap-work of C scrolls and cocksheaded arabesques; the handles are fat and bold in character, and all this iron-work shows signs of having been originally gilt. It will invariably be found that the iron fittings to furniture are rather earlier in their date than the rest of the construction, as the fashion in metal-work moved more slowly than in wood. This piece of furniture was discovered practically in its present condition in the basement of a house in the country, and used by children as a rabbit-hutch, the baby rabbits being relegated to the smaller compartments.

No architectural construction is attempted in this cabinet, but in the large, important chest (fig. 57), which is another early example of this new style, it will be seen that the Gothic sentiment is entirely excluded, and that the marqueterie and carving decorates a structure of purely classical design. This chest was given in 1556 to the church of St. Mary Overie by Hugh Offley, then Lord Mayor of London, and bears his arms and

those of his wife, together with his initials and merchant's marks. The design of the front represents the elevation of a building, at the top of which is a frieze of small carved strap-work in cherry-wood in very low relief; below this, the face of the chest is divided into panels, inlaid with the Offley armorial bearings and fine designs of conventional and floral ornaments in stained and coloured woods. Oak, walnut, pear, cherry, box, rose-wood, ebony, ash, yew, and holly are some of the different woods employed. The panels are framed in flat pilasters, inlaid in the same manner, and to represent the stones, holly knots with their curious marbled grain are employed. The lower compartment of the chest is composed of three drawers (one a restoration) inlaid with architectural views and foliated scrolls, bordered by a marqueterie chain pattern; the side panels of ash are framed by two flat Doric pilasters on inlaid plinths, and have the original iron handles. The whole of this fine chest, owing to the successive and thick coats of varnish with which it has been covered, is now a uniform brown colour, and the different woods can only be discerned by careful examination. Some twenty years only had elapsed between the completion of the King's College Stalls and the gift of this chest to the church, and in that short time this new style had definitely asserted itself. Deprived of its inlay, the structure and mouldings of this piece exactly correspond with the plain Henry II. furniture of the time; the vivacity of the marqueterie shows the perception of a taste in which the English eventually excelled, a perception prompted by their skill in needle-work, which for a long period had held the first place in Europe.

As allied to furniture, this needle-work was principally employed on the beds of which our early ancestors were so proud. Some of these beds, of which no traces remain, are minutely described in the wills and bequests of the time; for instance, Edmond, Earl of March, in 1380, bequeaths 'One large bed of black satin embroidered with white lions and gold roses, with escutcheons of the arms of Mortimer and Ulster.' In 1392 Richard, Earl of Arundel, leaves to his second wife, Philippa,



FIG. 57.—OAK CHEST INLAID WITH MARQUETERIE. Height, 3 feet 3 inches; length, 6 feet 6 inches; depth, 2 feet 4 inches.
Property of ST. SAVIOUR'S COLLEGIATE CHURCH, SOUTHWARK

'a blue bed marked with my arms and the arms of my late wife, to my son Richard a standing bed called Clove, also a bed of silk, embroidered with the arms of Arundel and Warren.' The custom of giving a bed a name was evidently adopted from the still older habit of naming favourite cups and swords; the somewhat patriarchal arrangement of handing on the bed of one wife to another is also curious. The same will goes on, 'To my dear son Thomas my blue bed of silk embroidered with gryphons, to my daughter Charlton my bed of red silk, to my daughter Margaret my blue bed.' There are very many wills of this description, proving that these elaborate beds were considered most precious property, and that their careful distribution by will was an especial mark of esteem; on the other hand, in Shakespeare's will, the sole bequest to his unfortunate wife is, 'Item I give unto my wife my second best bed with the furniture.' The amount of bedding belonging to an important bed must have been stupendous. In an extract from the will of Joane, Lady Bergavenny, in 1437, she devises 'A bed of gold swans with tapetter of green tapestry, two pairs of sheets, a pair of fustians, six pairs of other sheets, six pairs of blankets, six mattresses, six pillows, and the cushions and banncoves that longen to the bed aforesaid.' The banncoves were little benches that were placed at the foot of beds. In addition to all these blankets, mattresses, and pillows, constant references can be found to a pane of ermines or other fur, and feather beds. 'Thre feather bedes of hys wife's makin' form the bequest of William Blenkinsopp of Blenkinsopp Castle. Of these feather-beds Frederic, Duke of Wirtemburg, writes in 1591. 'Upon the river Thames there are many swans; these are so tame that you can almost touch them, but it is forbidden on pain of corporal punishment in any way to injure a swan, for Royalty has them plucked every year in order to have their down for feather-beds.' The whole bed, when made up, must have been excessively hot, but the occupants slept naked, and the silk and satin night-gowns, trimmed and lined with fur, that we read of in the middle of the fifteenth century, were probably only a form of dressing-

gown for receptions, an audience at the bedside being a daily custom in the houses of the great. There is a vivid description which gives great insight into the arrangements of a bedroom, from a contemporary MS., of a banquet given by Elizabeth Woodville, wife of Edward IV., in 1472, at Windsor, to the Lord of Gruthere, a Burgundian ambassador.

'Then aboute IX of the clocke, the Kinge and the Quene, with her ladies and gentlewomen, brought the sayde Lorde Grautehuse to three Chambres of Pleasance, all hanged with whyte sylke and lynnen clothe, and all the floures couered with carpettes. There was ordeined a Bedde for hym selue, of as good doune as coulde be gotten, the Shetes of Raynys, also fyne fustyans, the Counterpoynte clothe of golde, furred with armyn, the tester and the celer also shyninge clothe of golde, the Curteyns of whyte sarsenette, as for his headde sute and pillowes, they were of the Quenes owen ordonnance, Item in the third chambre was a other of astate, the whiche was alle whyte. And in the same chambre was made a couche with fether beddes, hanged with a tente, knytt lyke a nette, and there was a cuppborde. Item in the third chambre was ordeined a Bayne or two which were couered with tentes of whyte clothe. And when the Kinge and the Quene, with all her ladyes and gentlewomen, had shewed hym these chambres, they turned againe to their owen chambres, and left the sayde Lorde Grautehuse there accompanied with my Lorde Chamberlein whiche dispoyled hym, and wente bothe together to the Bayne . . . and when they had ben in theire Baynes as longe as was there pleasour, they had grene gynger, divers cyryppes, comfyttes and ipocras and then they wente to bedde.'

We also read in the ordinances of Henry VII., 'that he had a fustian and sheet under his feather bed, over the bed a sheet, then a pane of ermines, a head sheet of raynes (linen of Rennes), and another of ermines over the pillows.' After the ceremony of making this somewhat complicated bed, 'all the esquires, ushers, and others present had bread, ale and wine outside the chamber.'

It is impossible to give an illustration of even a Tudor Gothic bed in its entirety, for though portions of these beds are in existence, they are invariably found adapted and altered. They were composed of a tester of material or wood surmounted by a cornice, and supported on a panelled back, with posts at each corner. After 1550 the back posts were omitted, and in addition to the valance and curtains hung from the tester, other valances reaching to the ground were fixed on to the lower frame, from which

the mattresses and bedding were supported on rope-netting. Fig. 58 shows the back and side posts of a Tudor bed preserved in Hedingham Castle. The panels are of Renaissance form, carved with grotesque animals, hanaps, scrolls and dolphins, in the usual conventional manner, but a very distinct difference to the earlier work of this style can be remarked in the distribution and relief of the ornament. The design entirely spreads over the face of the panel, and the important points are without emphasis. The interest of the decoration lies in the two panels, the upper bearing the Royal Arms, the Tudor crown, the cup of state with the initials K. E. —the young king, Edward VI., having slept in the bed, the lower panel

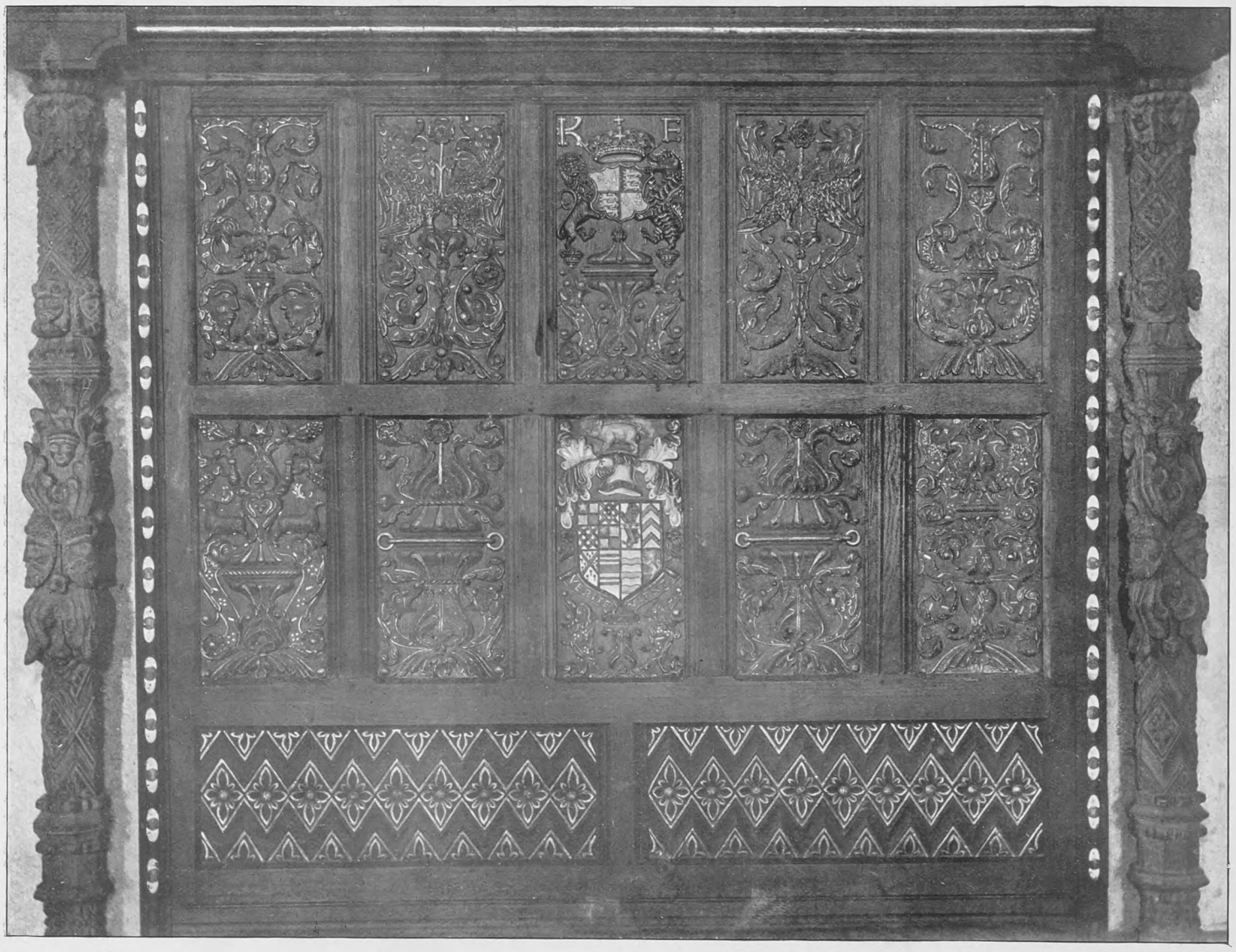


FIG. 58.—BACK OF BED. Oak. Height, 4 feet 4 inches; width, 5 feet 10 inches.
Property of J. H. A. MAJENDIE, Esq.

bears the De Vere arms and crest with their quarterings; both arms are tricked in their tinctures, and all the carving is picked out with gold, which, however, is not the original gilding. The side columns are still Gothic and slight in construction, while the conglomerate ornament and the bulbous growth—a development of Elizabethan taste—is seen in embryo, budding out from the Gothic sticks, so that in this interesting relic we get the rare combination of the three styles, Gothic, Renaissance, and Elizabethan. The remaining two posts of this bed are made up into a mantelpiece in another part of the house.

Almost contemporary with this bed is the little joint-stool (fig. 59), introduced here to explain the evolution of the bulbous form that later developed so strongly on the posts and legs of furniture. It will be observed that on the panels of the bed a Gothic cup and cover in conventional treatment is introduced, and repeated again as a knop on the posts; this occurs in the same manner on the legs of the stool in a slightly more bulbous manner; but this cup and cover in its restrained form had



FIG. 59.—OAK STOOL. Height, 1 foot 10 inches; length, 1 foot 4 inches. Property of SIR GEORGE DONALDSON

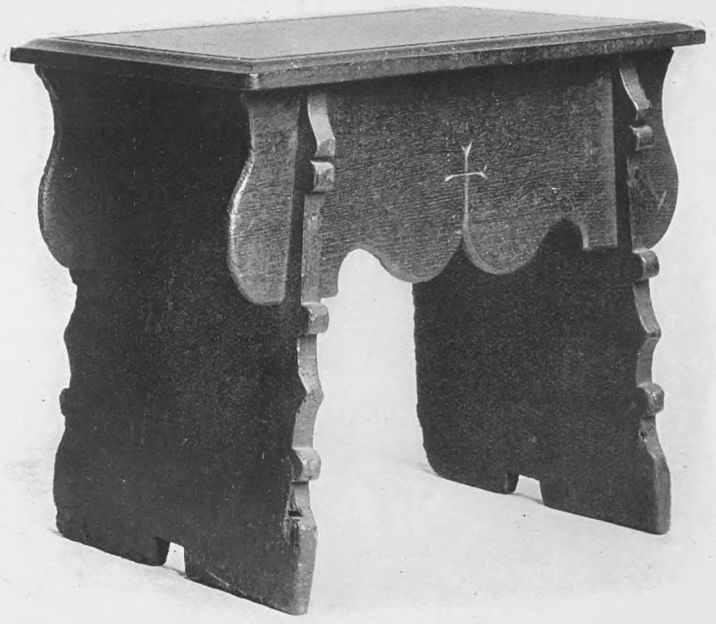


FIG. 60 *a*.—GOTHIC STOOL.
Property of SEYMOUR LUCAS, Esq.

It is only by careful observation of the growth and origin of small details that one is enabled with any degree of certainty to place a piece of furniture in its decade. Characteristic portions of an earlier design may overlap innovations and confuse the student, but a dated piece, such as the bed-back, having on its posts a novelty in ornament in embryo, establishes a period of design that is incontestible. In dating objects like furniture, the tendency generally is to predate them, and tradition connected with an individual piece should always be corroborated by corresponding details in other examples.

Joint or joyned stools were used in every room of a house and always in but a short life, developing all too rapidly, and at length assuming a circumference wholly disproportionate to its origin.

The legs of this stool are fluted in the Renaissance manner, and finish in bases and caps of a pearled ornament. The frame is studded with bold nail-headings between narrow reed mouldings, and supported by small ogeed brackets; the top is original, and the whole stool is in perfect preservation.



FIG. 60 *b*.—GOTHIC STOOL.
Property of Sir CHARLES LAWES-WITTEWRONGE, Bart.

the bedrooms, where they served the purposes of small tables as well as seats, and before the introduction of the lighter chairs they had been the only portable form of seat. In times of quarrel they were resorted to as offensive and defensive weapons, and in powerful hands could be thrown with deadly effect, for up till the middle of the seventeenth century a fight following a heated discussion was by no means confined to the inn. Fig. 60 shows two of these stools of early date, being entirely of Gothic construction; while those in fig. 61 are of the date 1535, and decorated on the sides with medallioned heads of the Renaissance. In one of these stools (61 *b*) it will be noticed that the top forms a small coffer, and there are traces on it of the original vermilion with which it was painted. The first light form of chair used in bedrooms was of simple turned work, and often of triangular



FIG. 61 *a*.—OAK STOOL. Height, 1 foot 11 inches; length, 1 foot 6 inches. Property of MORGAN WILLIAMS, Esq.



FIG. 61 *b*.—OAK STOOL. Height, 1 foot 6 inches; length, 2 feet 1 inch. Property of MORGAN WILLIAMS, Esq.

shape. An extract from an inventory of about 1540 mentions one of these chairs, and well describes the furniture of a bedroom in what is called 'the greate chambre over the perlor':—

'First a hanging all round the room of grene and red saye, paynede. Item, one greate trussing bed with two fether beds, where of one is downe, with two bolsters and two pillows of downe. Item, three blankets of woolen clothe, a coverlet of verder worke enlyned. Item, a mantill of red. Item, a joined cupborde with a counterfet carpet upon it. Item, a short table joyned with a coarse carpett upon it. Item, two chests, a turneyed chaire. Item, three quysshins. Item, two awndyerns, a fyer pan, a payer of tongs. Item, a chafer of brasse, two basons, two joyned stools.'

Figs. 62 and 63 are two of these turned chairs. Of Byzantine origin, their pattern was introduced by the Varangian guard into Scandinavia, and from there doubtless brought to England by the Normans, they continued to be made until the end of the sixteenth century. The chair in Hereford

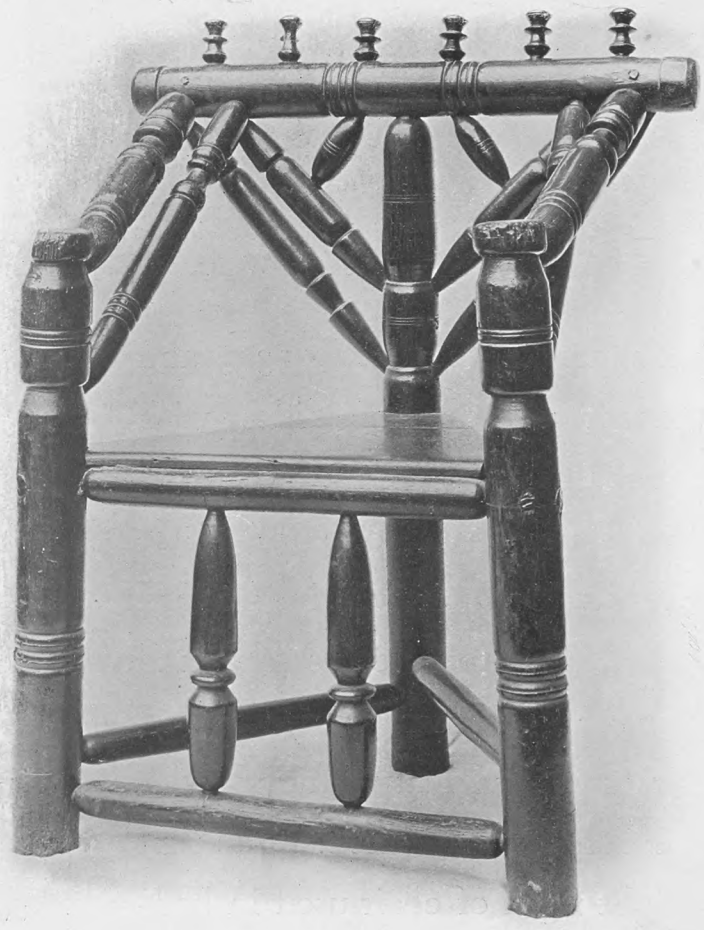


FIG. 62.—TURNED CHAIR. Oak. Height, 2 feet 11 inches.
Property of MORGAN WILLIAMS, Esq.

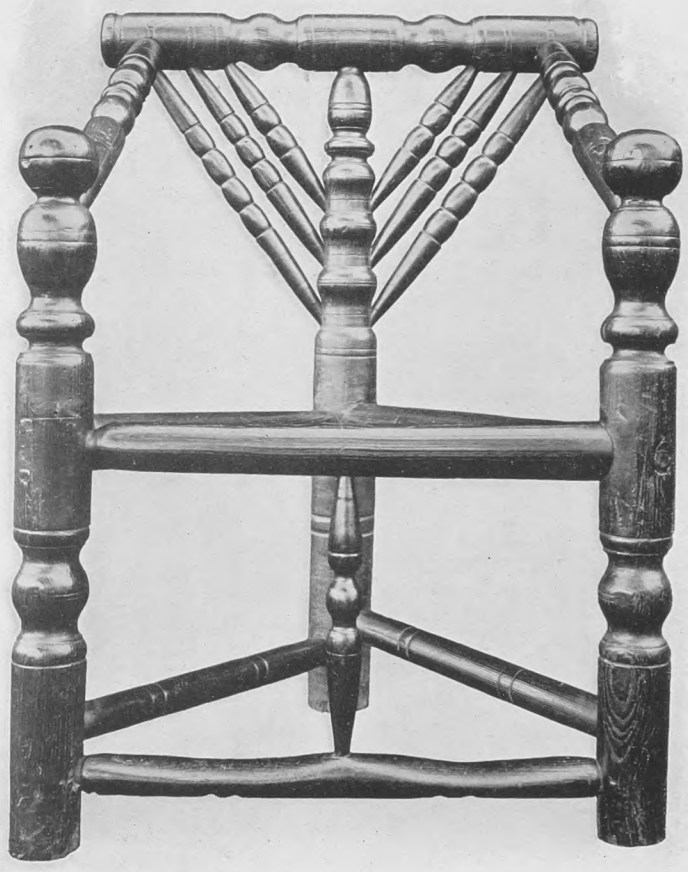


FIG. 63.—TURNED CHAIR. Oak.
Property of A. L. RADFORD, Esq.

Cathedral, locally supposed to have been used by King John, is of this type.

Fig. 64 is an example of a state bed that would be used in an important house. It is of oak, and of about the date 1560. The carving throughout is very large in scale; the cornice moulding is plain, supported by dentals and corbels, beneath which runs a frieze carved in guilloche in low relief. The ceiling of the tester (fig. 65) is divided into four panels, each bearing a grotesque mask; they are framed in heavy stiles and rails, 15 inches wide and 6 inches deep, which centre in a larger mask, the idea being evidently that from every point a face should look down on the occupant of the bed. This tester and ceiling weighs nearly a quarter of a ton. In the back of the bed are framed the Royal Arms, with the Lion of England and Dragon of Wales as supporters. On either side are the half-length figures of a man and woman in the costume of 1560, all carved in extra high relief; above and below runs a frieze of rosace carving, and on the outside are representations of hounds with escutcheons. The posts stand beyond the actual bed, and start from enormous bulbous bases 3 feet high and 3 feet 6 inches in circumference; these are carved with bold gadroons, and are necked top and bottom with a guilloche moulding; the bulbous form is repeated again above, finishing in narrow, graceful columns.

A bed of great purity of style in the classical taste is fig. 66, which was removed together with the panelling of the room from Sizergh Hall, Westmorland. The date is about 1568; this is shown by the architectural simplicity of construction and the reticence of its ornament, which all bears a strong similarity of taste and treatment to the St. Mary Overie chest (fig. 57). The tester of the bed, 7 feet 6 inches in length, is composed of a cornice and frieze of light-coloured oak, inlaid with an arabesque of holly-wood stained pale green and bog-oak, and is fitted to the pilasters forming part of the panelling; the columns that support this tester are not attached to the actual bed, which lies quite separate



Fig. 64.—OAK BED. Height, 7 feet 6 inches; width, 6 feet. Property of Morgan Williams, Esq.

within them; they are composite in their order and of walnut, with cups and bases, simple and fine in treatment; the plinths are walnut, panelled with oak. The back is divided into six panels of lime-wood, inlaid with a bold strap-work of walnut, in a framing of oak inlaid with a trellis of holly wood and bog-oak, on the stiles of which eight terminal figures of classical design are applied. These figures, so constantly found on the backs of beds, represented originally sacred characters, but in later Elizabethan times developed into rudely carved caryatides of warriors and fat goddesses. The embroidered silk curtains, valances, quilts and fringes, together with the carved wood-work of an important Elizabethan



FIG. 65.—CEILING OF TESTER TO FIG. 64

bed, very frequently cost the equivalent to £500 of our money to-day, and a sum that would represent more than double that would not have gone very far in the outlay entailed on the elaborate decoration of a state



FIG. 66.—BED FROM SIZERGH HALL. Property of the VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM

bed. Our ancestors considered the piece of furniture connected with their birth, marriage, and death as most important, and emphasised this



FIG. 67.—OAK BED. Height, 6 feet 7 inches. Property of SIR CHARLES LAWES-WITTEWRONGE, Bart.



FIG. 68.—OAK BED

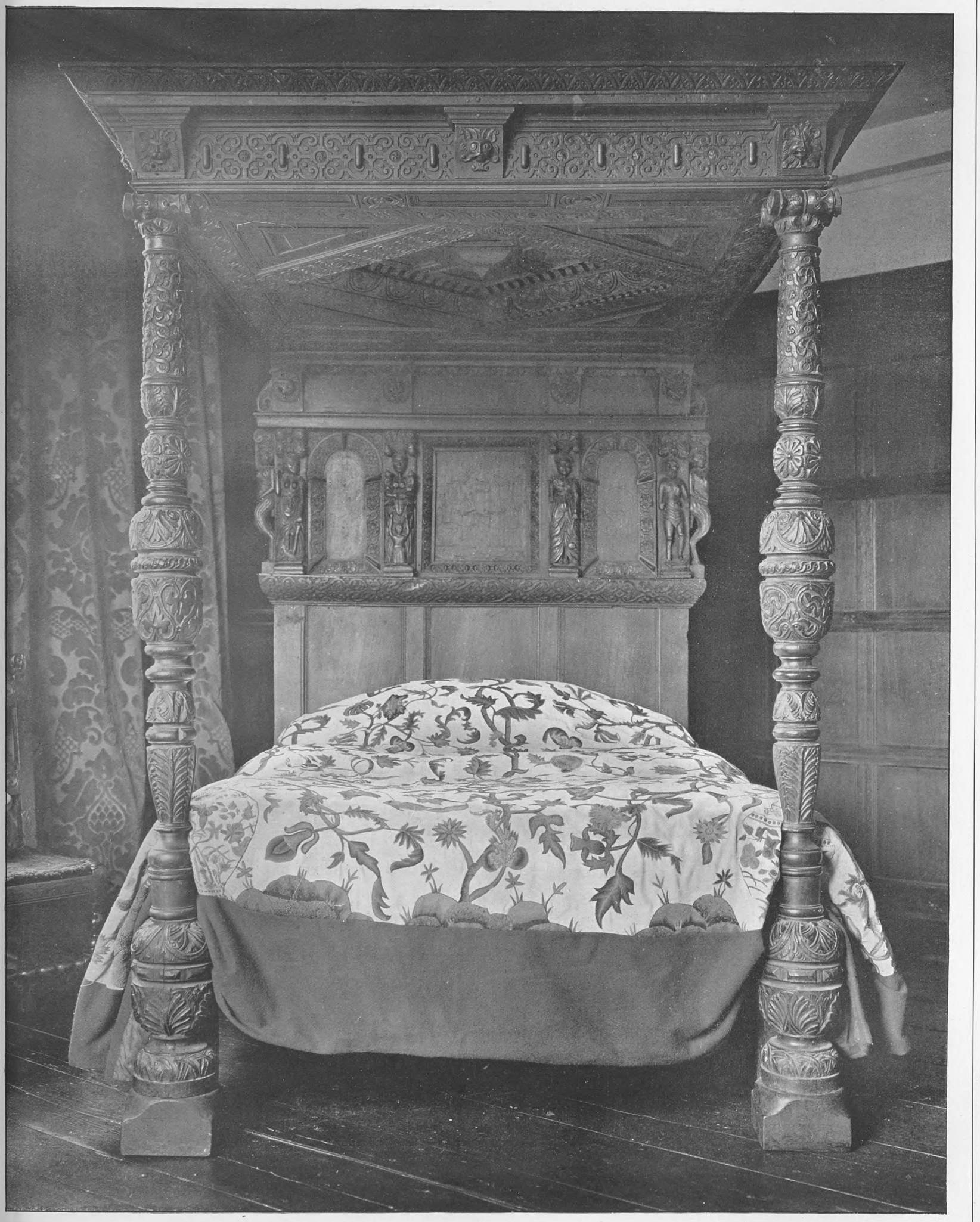


Fig. 69.—OAK BED. Property of Sir Charles Lawes-Wittewronge, Bart.

fact by a corresponding expenditure of money over it. Even the smaller and more domestic specimens, such as fig. 67, must have been costly; this is a very good representation of the ordinary bed in a well-furnished house of about 1570. It stands low, being about six feet seven inches in height. The frieze to the tester is carved prettily with masks and strap-work, surmounted by a row of dentals, above which runs the favourite acanthus cornice found on most of these beds; this is supported by short columns, springing from the bulbous bases now coming so much into fashion, and lasting as a taste for over fifty years. The bases in this instance are large in proportion to the posts; they measure two feet four inches in circumference, and stand on plinths of typical Elizabethan design; the panels of the back are in carved and arched compartments, and decorated with vases of flowers, not however of marqueterie, as is usual, but painted in colours, and unfortunately invisible in the reproduction. On the stiles are male and female terms; and grotesque figures playing on pipes take the place of the headposts found in the preceding reigns. The absence of plain surfaces, the restlessness of the perpetual ornament, are very indicative of the ever-changing taste of the time. The 'Great Bed of Ware' is too well known to reproduce. There is an allusion to this celebrated piece of furniture in the Poetical Itinerary of Prince Ludwig of Anhalt-Cothen in 1596, which is anterior to the quotation in *Twelfth Night*. Its dimensions are 10 feet 9 inches in width, 10 feet 9 inches in length, and 7 feet $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches in height. Prince Ludwig states that it held four couples with comfort! Originally at the Crown Inn, Ware, it passed into the possession of Charles Dickens, to find its present resting-place at the Rye House. Fig. 68 exactly resembles this bed in the architectural construction of the columns, but possesses greater elegance of proportion. The carving of the arcades at the back is rich and deep, and the marqueterie inlay of the panels careful in design; the upper mouldings of this arcade are burnt in many places, proving that it was customary to burn a rushlight on the lower edge; the armorial hangings are of the

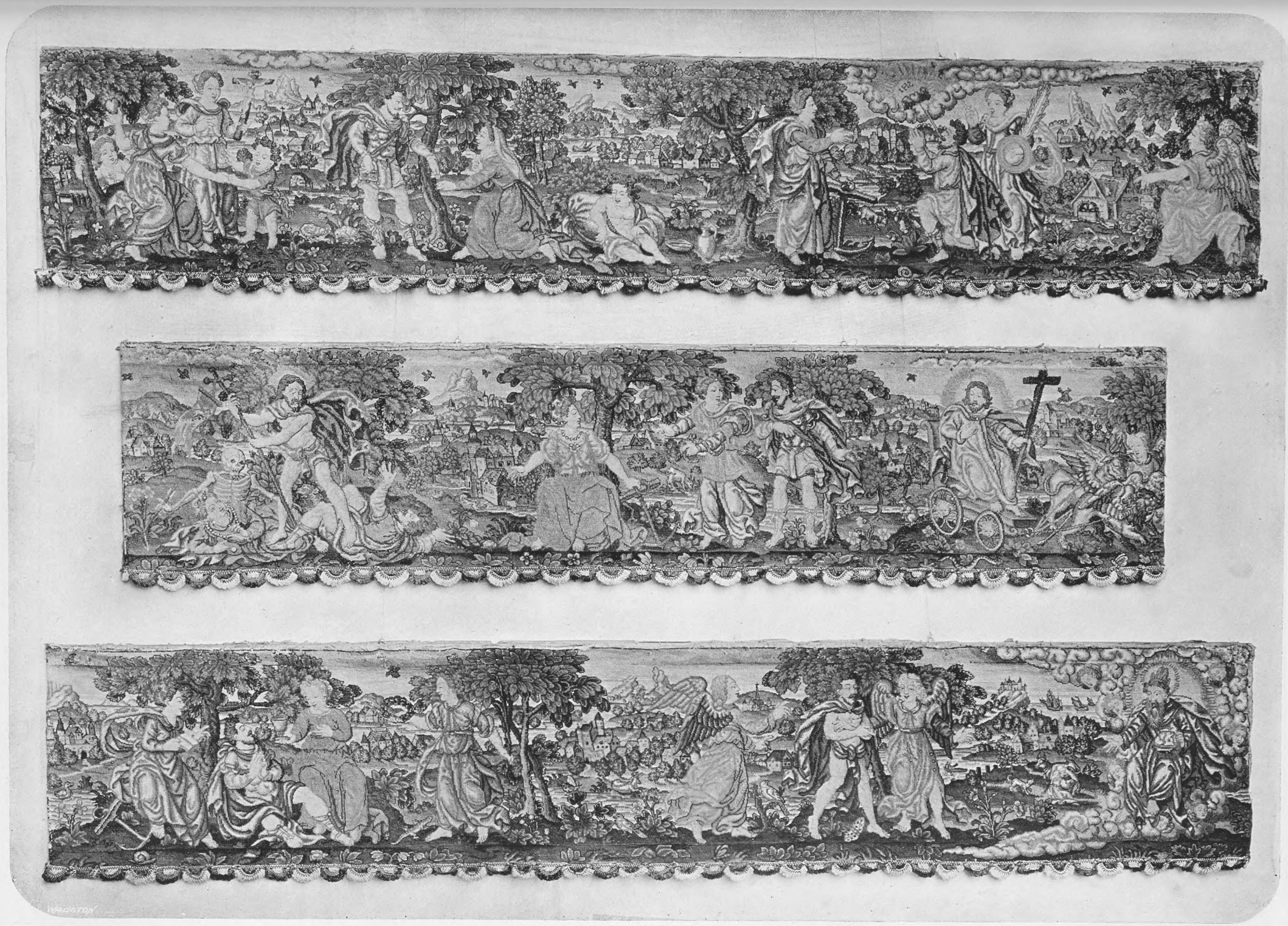


Fig. 70.—NEEDLE-WORK TESTER AND VALANCES



FIG. 71.—SET OF ELIZABETHAN CUSHIONS. Property of LORD FITZHARDINGE

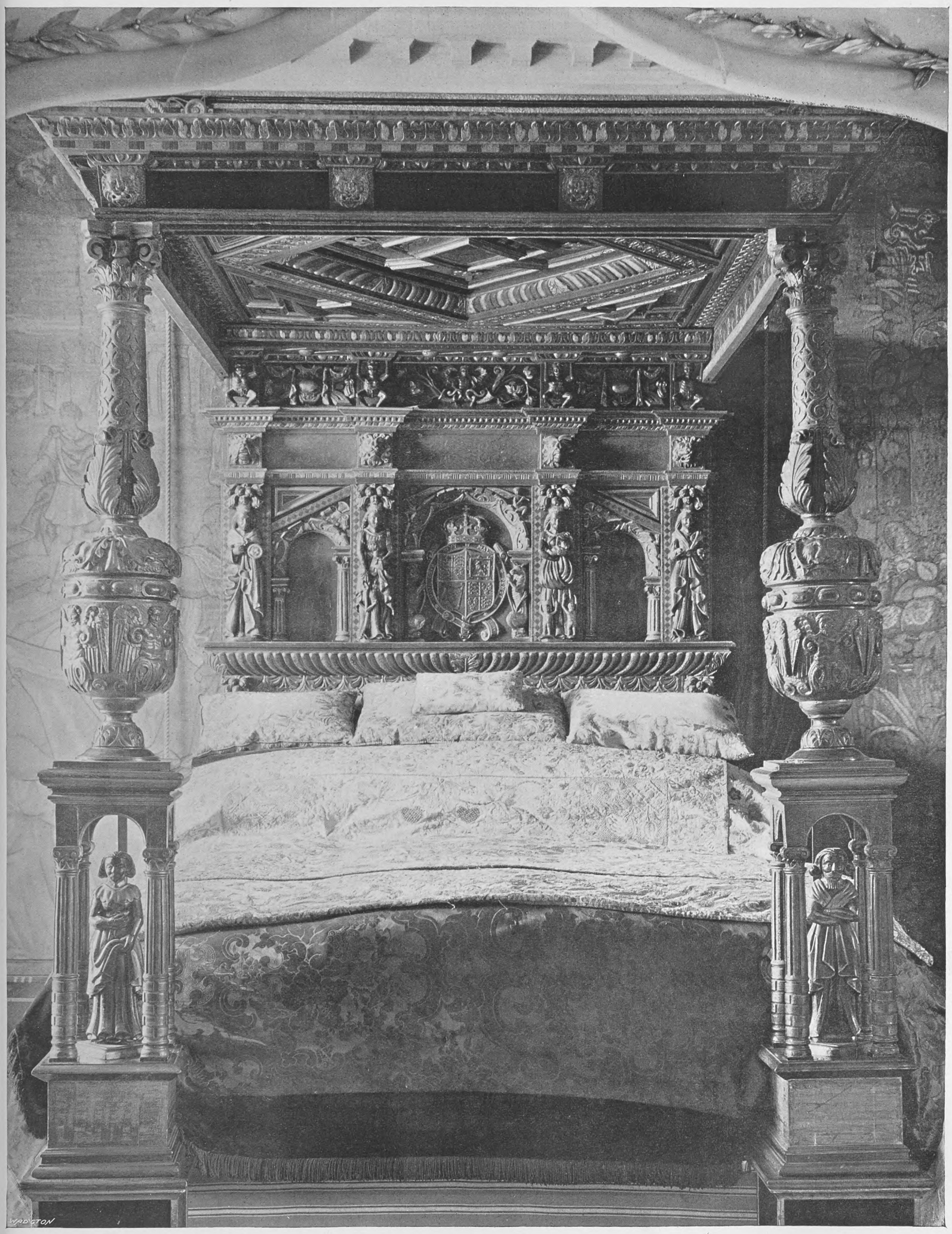


FIG. 72.—OAK BED. Height, 6 feet 6 inches; width, 5 feet 6 inches; length, 6 feet 10 inches. Property of LORD FITZHARDINGE

following century, at which date, no doubt, the whole construction was heightened.

All these testered carved oak bedsteads much resemble one another in the general arrangement of their ornament, the differences being marked only by the quality of the carving and form of the posts, the latter as various in their character as the occupants of the bed. Fig. 69, date 1590, shows a further delicacy of proportion in the design of these posts, the lines being inspired by the beautiful French bed-posts of the previous twenty years, though in this particular instance the carving is somewhat coarse. The marqueterie panels of the back, representing the view of a town, are almost obscured by varnish. The soffits of the arches are unusually charming in their simple character, and the four figures on the divisions represent Hope, Charity, Justice, and Fortitude, while grotesque figures border the outer stiles; the ceiling and frieze that the columns support are more full of design than the majority of these testers; the pillows and bedding in their proper position should be within six inches of the carved shelf-rail. In these later and smaller examples the hangings were generally of linen, embroidered in crewels, with a pattern of foliage, flowers, and birds, the silken and tapestry curtains being used only on the finer beds; a so-called mourning bed draped in black was kept by some families, and lent to different members as occasion required. Paul Hentzner, after travelling here in 1598, writes :—

'Their beds are covered with needlework, even those of farmers';

and again in describing the Queen's rooms in Hampton Court :—

'In her bedchamber the bed was covered with very costly coverlids of silk. At no great distance from this room we were shown a bed, the tester of which was worked by Anne Boleyn and presented to her husband Henry VIII. In the hall there are curiosities: the bed in which Edward VI. is said to have been born, and where his mother, Jane Seymour, died in childbed; numbers of cushions ornamented with gold and silver, many counterpanes and coverlids of beds, lined with ermines; there is also a musical instrument made all of glass except the strings.'

Fig. 70 gives tester valances of English needle-work of about 1590,

the subject being the allegory of life. They were formerly in Littlecote Wilts, the scene of the strange tradition of the child-murder by William Darrell, in which the hangings of a bed played so prominent a part in the story. Another favourite form of bed-hangings, probably for summer use, were of linen finely embroidered in coloured silks, the quilt, cushion, and pillows being made to match. Fig. 71 shows a set of bed-cushions, of about 1580, one unfortunately missing, the largest of which is 2 feet long by 1 foot broad, the others decreasing in the same proportion. They are of the finest linen, embroidered with a border of flowers in white and cherry-coloured silks and silver thread; the centres are plain linen, delicately trellised in a back-stitch of pale yellow silk. These five cushions were used by Queen Elizabeth during a visit to Berkeley Castle, and are preserved there, together with the quilt that matches them on the bed (fig. 72). Elizabeth was probably the first Queen who paid almost fastidious attention to things connected with her toilet-chamber and the details of her bedroom, where highly favoured visitors were continually received. The following extract from a letter written in 1578 by Gilbert Talbot to his father, the Earl of Shrewsbury, is interesting, showing that night-attire was now worn, and that the Virgin Queen, at the age of forty-five, added to her other charms by leaning out of the window in this costume.

'On May-Day I saw Her Majesty, and it pleased her to speak to me very graciously. In the morning about eight o'clock I happened to walk in the Tiltyard, under the gallery where Her Majesty useth to stand to see the running at tilt, where by chance she was, and looking out of the window my eye was full towards her. She shewed to be greatly ashamed thereof for that she was unready, and in her night-stuff, so when she saw me at after dinner, as she went to walk, she gave me a great fillip on the forehead, and told my Lord Chamberlain who was next to her, how I had seen her that morning and how much ashamed she was.'

The posts of the bed (fig. 72) stand on architectural canopies supported on four small columns, beneath which are two figures in oak, the large bulbous bases to the posts being also carved with human torsos in low relief (an unusual feature), finishing at the top in baluster-shaped

columns clothed in raised acanthus. The back contains three panels; the centre of these bears the royal arms of James I., who slept in the bed, those on the sides being painted with the figures of Justice and Mercy. This back is framed in stiles, on which are the four figures, Faith, Hope, Charity, and Fortitude; above this runs a band of fine marqueterie, surmounted by a carved frieze. The cornice of the tester is corbelled at intervals with lions' masks, and the carving throughout is picked out rather coarsely with gilding of a recent date.

Although the number of chairs used even in important bedrooms at this time still remained limited, the growth of comfort is shown by an increase in those made for the parlours and withdrawing-rooms. Fig. 73 is a lady's chair of the cacqueteuse type, of Scottish origin. It is of oak, and made during the close relationship that existed between the court of Mary Stuart and France. The back is composed of a raised panel carved with a chain strap-work in very low relief; the uprights framing it are carved in fine line, and the top rail is surmounted by a simple scrolled cresting, terminating in a small finial; the arms are bowed, supported on balustered uprights. The front rail of the seat is unusually wide, and on all three sides is on arched compartments, with the same baluster supports. In foreign chairs of this kind, the centre generally finishes in a pendant, and the Scottish workman in introducing a baluster in its place has evidently been at a loss to complete satisfactorily the alteration from the original design; the incised lines on the face of the arches representing bricking are interesting. This chair is contemporary with the murder of Darnley. Fig. 74 is some fifteen years later in date; here the back opens into two arches in the style of Charles IX. of France, between which lies a narrow panel of Elizabethan carving. The cresting at the top shows the double scroll that eventually became so typical a finish to all these panel-back chairs; the supports to the arms are tall, like all early chairs of this kind, and their design is repeated on the front legs. These open-back chairs do not appear ever to have become popular; they certainly could not have



FIG. 73.—OAK CHAIR. Height, 3 feet 9 inches; height to seat, 1 foot 4 inches.
Property of SIR GEORGE DONALDSON



FIG. 74.—OAK CHAIR
Property of SIR GEORGE DONALDSON

been conducive to warmth in rooms so draughty that men wore their hats at meals, and drew their chairs so close to open fires, that wicker coverings to fit the legs stood by the hearths to be used as guards against scorched shins. All chairs between 1570 and 1620, except those of 'X' form, had panelled backs, and the well-known type (fig. 75) continued to be made with slight alterations until the beginning of the eighteenth century, but it is extremely difficult to place them in correct chronological succession. The earlier specimens have no brackets or ears, as they are termed, at the sides of the back panel; the arms are flatter and straighter, and often inlaid or incised; the arm supports are higher, and the seats rather wider than in the later chairs.

The detail of the simple but effective carving on the panel of fig. 75 very much resembles the decoration and arrangement of the faces on each side of the lunette on the gable dated 1572 over the porch at Kirby Hall; while fig. 76 is a west country chair of about the same date, the carving exactly corresponding with that of a door at Nailsea Court, Somerset, also built at that time. Here the pattern is formed by sinking the ground and leaving the face of the panel for the design. On the top rail is incised a graceful scroll-work of flowers, originally filled with marqueterie; the introduction of the bold nail-heading marks the period, and at each corner of the rail may be noticed the suggestion of the ear-form that later became so prevalent. The arm supports are high, and of square vase-shaped baluster form, repeated in the legs.

A large and curiously constructed round table top exists in the Castle Hall at Winchester, painted with allusions to King Arthur and his knights, and is shown to tourists as the original piece of furniture connected with the fable, though probably made in the fifteenth century. The disappearance of early tables may be due to the fact that they were of trestle form, the parts being detachable. These trestle tables are represented in the English MSS. of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries as a board laid on two or more crossed supports, often covered with an



Fig. 75.—OAK CHAIR. Property of Sir George Donaldson



Fig 76.—OAK CHAIR. Height, 3 feet 7 inches. Property of Earl of Carrington

elaborate embroidered linen cloth. Fig. 77 is about 1520, of elm, and very few of these elm tables exist, owing to the perishable nature of the wood. The frame and stretcher run through the trestle supports, and are kept in position by movable oak pegs. When space was important, these pegs were withdrawn, and the various parts stacked against the wall. Froissart, in speaking of the King of England in 1350, says, 'Quand on eust soupe on lever les tables si demeura le dict roy en la salle'; and again,



FIG. 77.—END OF TABLE. Elm. Height, 2 feet 7 inches; length, 9 feet.
Property of SIR CHARLES LAWES-WITTEWRONGE, Bart.



FIG. 78.—TABLE. Oak. Height, 2 feet 8 inches; length, 27 feet; width, 3 feet. Property of LORD DE LISLE AND DUDLEY

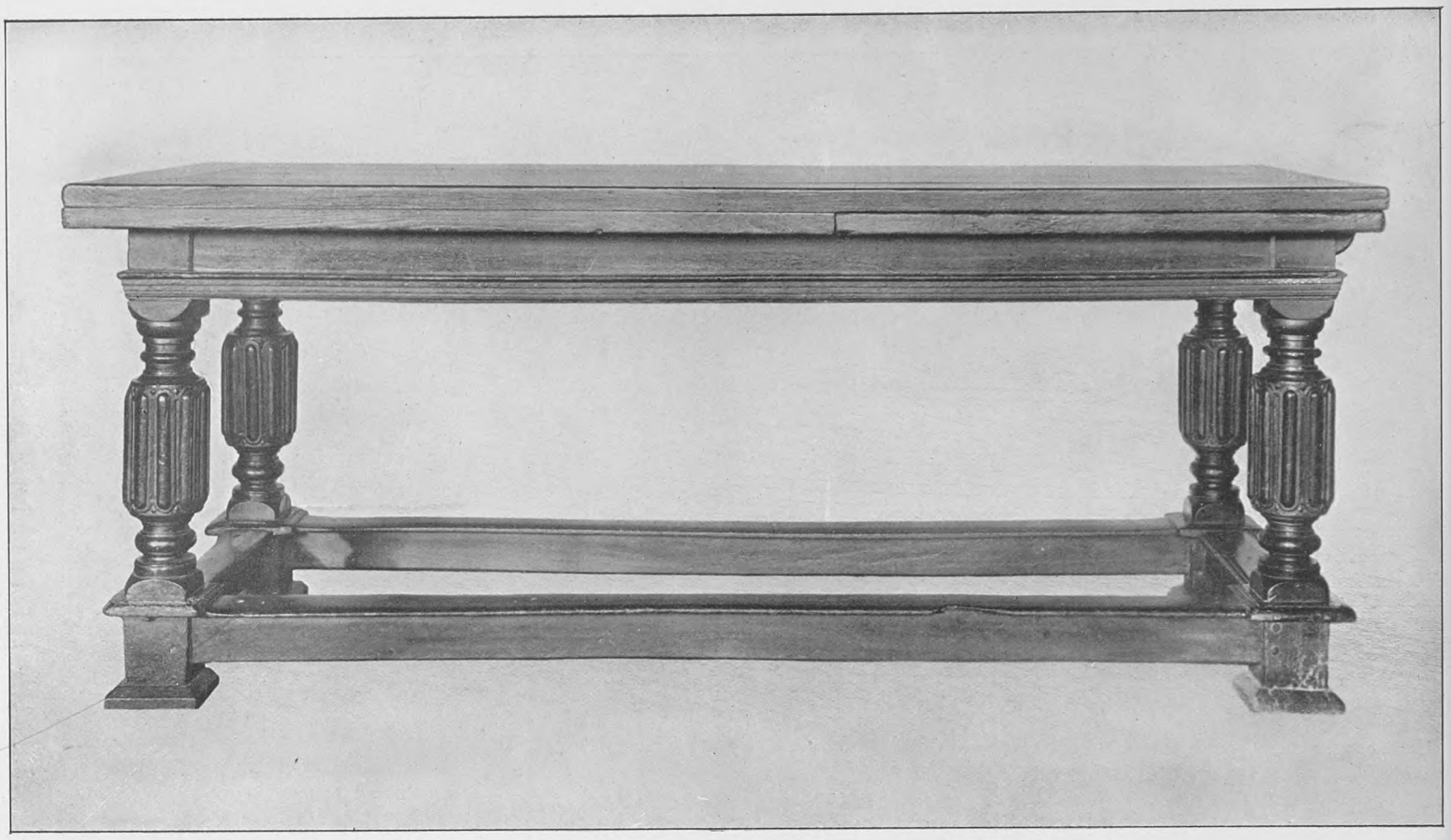


FIG. 79.—TABLE. Oak. Height, 2 feet 10 inches; length, 7 feet 8 inches. Property of A. L. RADFORD, Esq.



FIG. 80.—TABLE. Cherry-wood. Height, 2 feet 6 inches; length, 6 feet 2 inches; width, 2 feet 5 inches.
Property of MORGAN WILLIAMS, Esq.

'Furent les tables levees et abattues soudainment pour les dames et damouselles estre au large.' An oak table such as Froissart mentions is represented in fig. 78, and is one of two, standing in the great hall at Penshurst. They are of the beginning of the fifteenth century, and the finest examples in this country of the early trestle table. The top of this table is kept in place by its own weight, which is enormous, for it measures 27 feet in length, 3 feet in width, and is composed of four oak planks without any join: although of rude workmanship, the style and proportion is magnificent; and the blocked-out mouldings to the trestle supports relieved by smaller crocketings running up the four sides are most effective. The wood is light in colour and has never been dressed in any way. At the further end of this table the line of the floor dais can be seen, on which another table was placed at right angles for the lord and master of the house, with his family and guests. At this high table the seats were only on one side, the food being served from the other as in classical times; it was therefore easy for those eating to select the food with their fingers from the dishes handed, as the width of these early tables was seldom more than two feet. A wooden trencher or a thick slice of bread served as a plate, the important personages having deep silver saucers or low basins, also a wooden bowl, called a 'voyder,' for the portions they did not require: those inferior in station, and seated at the low tables, threw what they did not fancy on the floor. The height of these tables averages 2 feet 8 inches—5 inches higher than the modern dining-table.

With the invention of the draw-top a revolution took place in tables: the solid trestles at the ends were replaced by legs that formed part of the frame, and an outside lower rail or stretcher served the double purpose of a lower tie to the legs and a foot-rest. The top was in three pieces, the lower leaves drawing out and being supported by long armed brackets; the upper leaf dropped into its position, and so the table elongated to double its length—a simple and effective contrivance. The trestle table ceased to

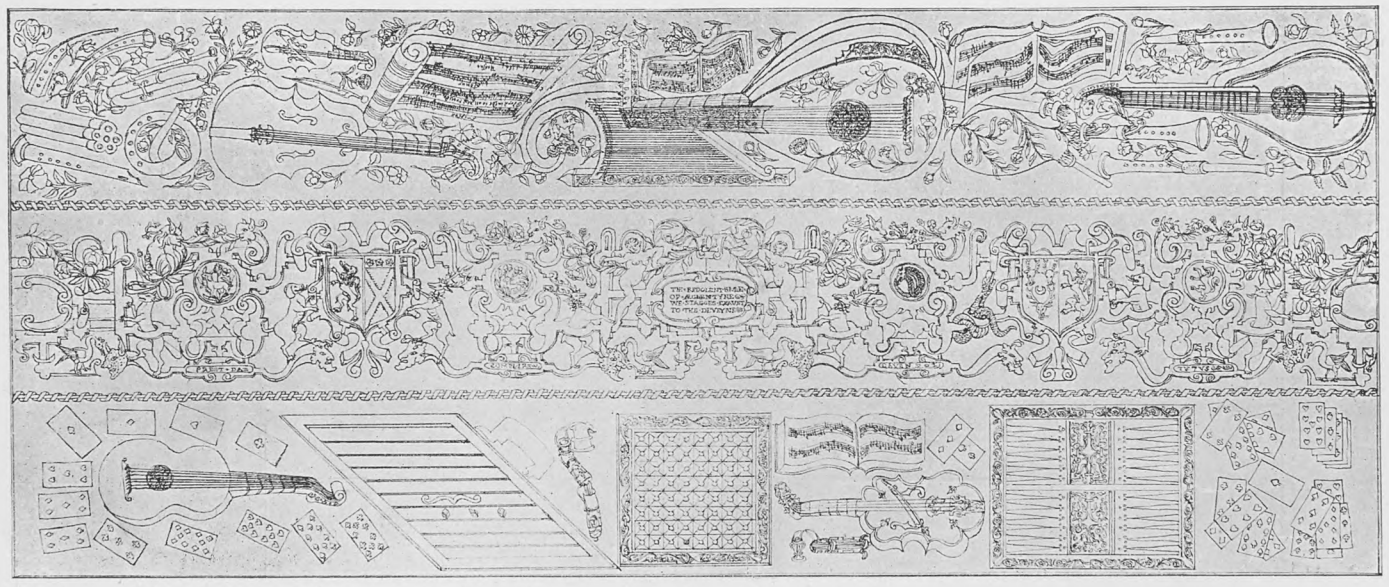


FIG. 81.—KEY TO FIG. 82

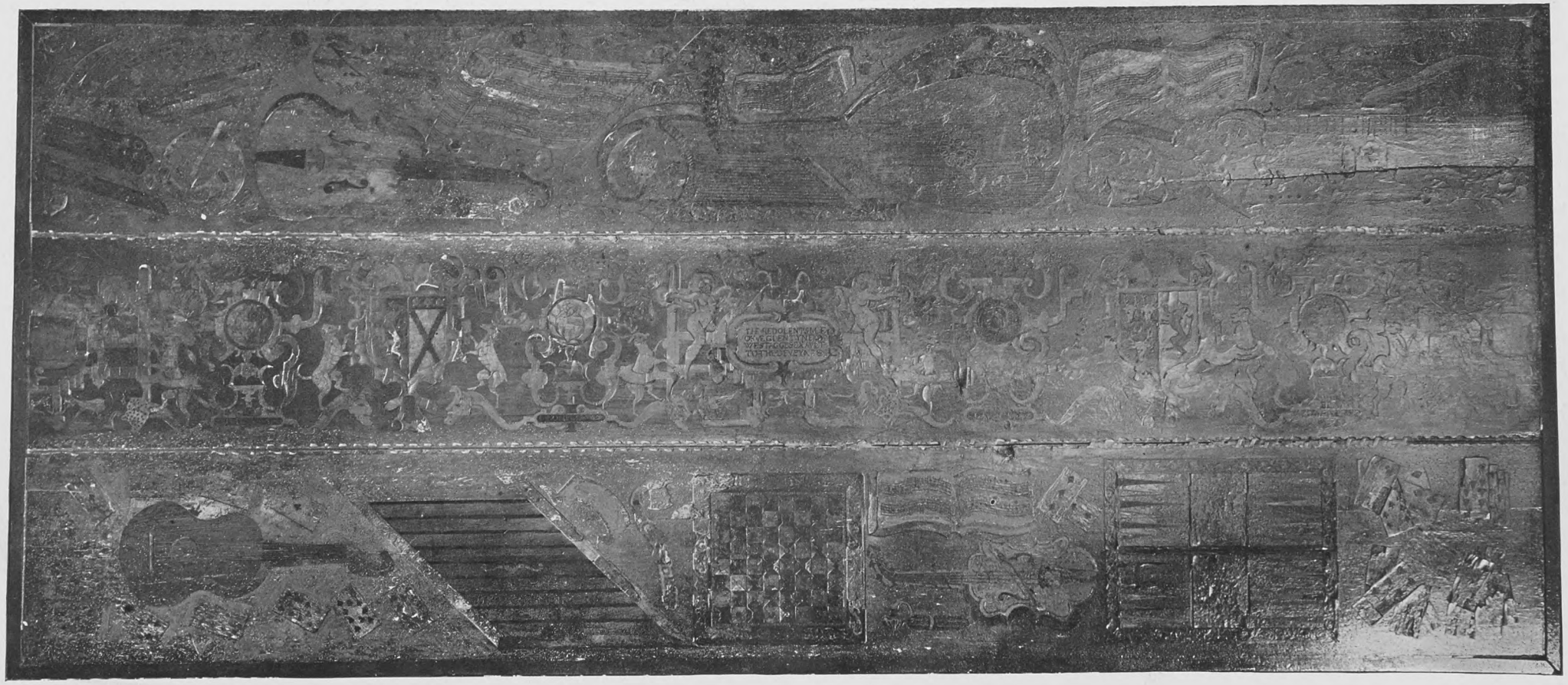


FIG. 82.—TOP OF TABLE (WALNUT) INLAID WITH MARQUETERIE. Length, 9 feet 11 inches; width, 4 feet 3 inches.
Property of the DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE

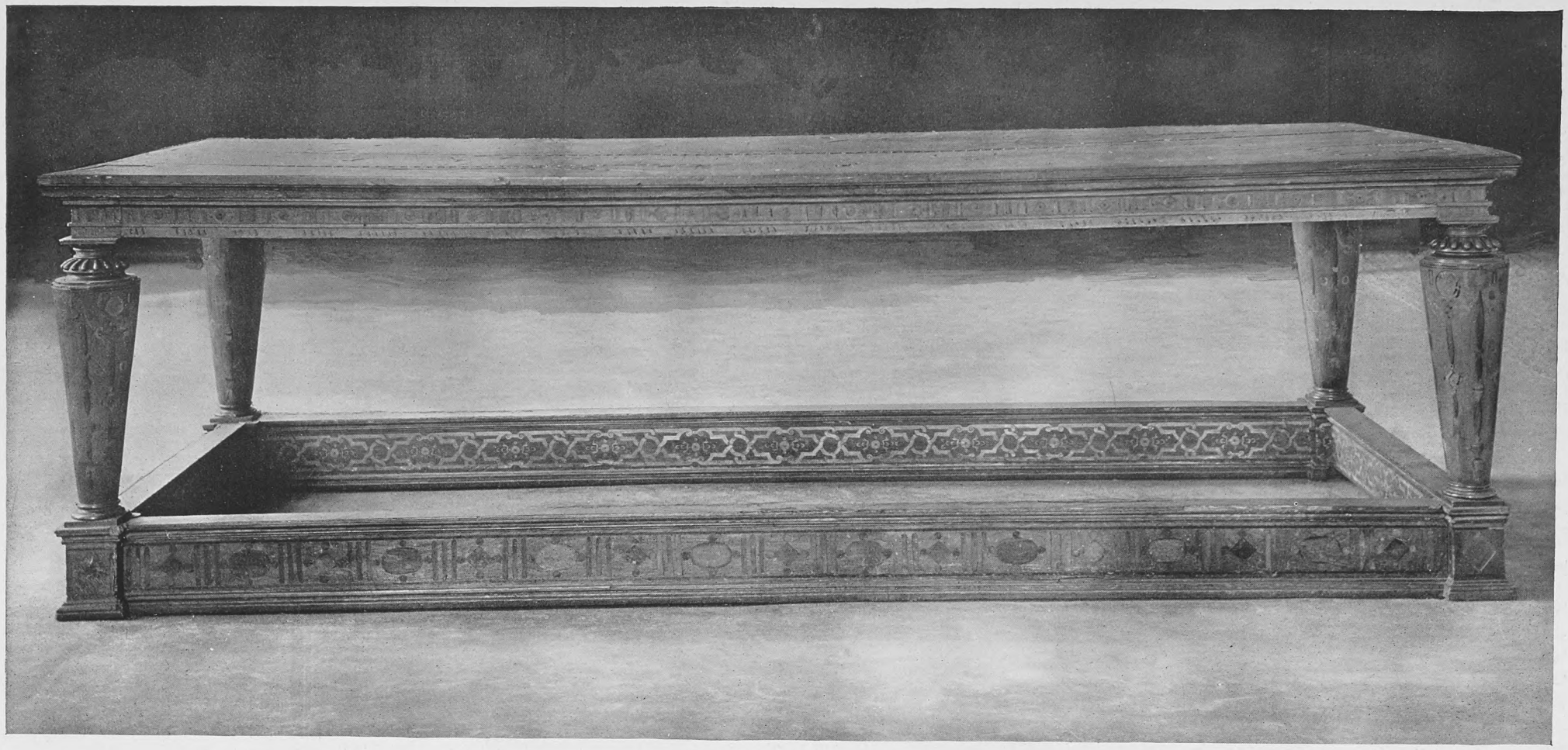


FIG 83.—TABLE (WALNUT) INLAID WITH MARQUETERIE. Same as FIG. 82. Height, 3 feet. Property of the DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE

be used after the middle of the sixteenth century, and was relegated to the servants' quarters. Fig. 79 is an oak draw-table of 1560, of simple proportion, which originally belonged to the Wadham family of Oxford celebrity. The mouldings are classical, inspired by contemporary French taste; and the legs conform to this style, in no way suggesting the rather bulbous vulgarity of the later fashion. In all early tables of this kind it should be observed that the foot-rail is T-shaped in section; it is not till later that it became four-sided. Fig. 80 is another draw-table of rather later date, the frame and legs made of cherry, a wood highly prized in Tudor times; the top is of oak, and has lost the two lower leaves. The frame is carved on a punched ground in a simple open chain of squares and circles, the latter being rosaced; the gadrooning on the bulbous supports is concave, and these finish in a necking of the egg and tongue that preceded the Ionic capitals found on later tables. This cherry-wood furniture is extremely rare; it becomes coffee-colour with age and preserves a most beautiful surface. When not in use for meals, these were often covered with a fine Persian rug, unless the top was inlaid with marqueterie, as in the case of fig. 82, which is probably the most interesting English table in existence. The top is walnut, composed of three planks, inlaid in a most elaborate manner with musical instruments, armorial bearings, and the properties pertaining to various games of chance: these three lengths of decoration, entirely distinct from each other, are divided by an inlaid cable moulding, an heraldic bordure of the Cavendish family. The upper compartment (which can be seen more clearly in the key, fig. 81) shows the surface inlaid with a cyterrne, lute, viol, rebeck, flutes, sackbuts, and shawms; scattered over and amongst them are flowers and fruits inlaid in their proper colours. The centre panel bears the Cavendish, Talbot, and Hardwick arms with their supporters. These bearings are connected with a bold strap-work and garlands of flowers, the centre being occupied by an escutcheon set in strap-work, on which are seated the figures of two nude women, inlaid in many separate pieces, the



PLATE VI (AGE OF OAK)

WRITING CABINET INLAID WITH MARQUETERIE

HEIGHT, 2 FEET 3 INCHES
LENGTH, 2 „ 9 „
DEPTH, 1 FOOT 3 „

Edmund Hoyle



shadows on the bodies being burned in the wood. The escutcheon bears the inscription:—

THE . REDOLENT . SMLE . (smell)
OF . AEGLENTYNE . (sweetbriar)
WE . STAGGES . (Cavendish & Hardwick) EXAVET (exault)
TO THE DEVEYNE . (divine).

On the lower panels are inlaid a cyternne, boards for dice, a violin, and writing materials; the inlay is not laid down in a veneer, but in every instance the cells are cut an eighth of an inch out of the solid walnut to receive the pattern, but it is unfortunately so much damaged that a reference to the key will be found necessary. The frame and legs to this table (fig. 83) are of oak, the former inlaid with a frieze of classical design, divided by triglyphs, below which are the guttæ; the legs are columns, shaped as inverted cones, with curious little neckings, small capitals, and a very shallow abacus; the shafts are inlaid with rings and festoons, and slips of coloured wood set edgeways to resemble marble in small plaques; the foot-rail is deep, of T-form, inlaid on the outside with a classical frieze, and painted on the inside with an elegant strap-work. This remarkable and beautiful piece of furniture was made for Elizabeth (or Bess) of Hardwick, on the occasion of her marriage to her fourth husband, the Earl of Shrewsbury, in 1568, and the arms represented commemorate, as well as her own marriage, the unions of her son Henry Cavendish and her daughter Mary Cavendish with a son and daughter of Lord Shrewsbury. The stags and stags' heads that so constantly occur all through the decoration of Hardwick are emblems of Cavendish and Hardwick; the Talbot hound of Shrewsbury is also occasionally introduced.

Another ornamental table in the same Great Presence-Chamber at Hardwick is fig. 84. It is of rather later date, but decorated in a somewhat similar manner. In this instance the entire structure is of walnut, the top being inlaid with a parqueterie of yew, beech, oak, and

bog oak, in circles and diamond shapes, surrounded by a border inlaid with a strap-work terminating in cherries; at the four corners is inlaid a playing-card, the five of each suit. The frame of the table (fig. 85) is inlaid with a classical frieze supported by square Doric columns, the fluting represented by an inlay of yew; the foot-rail is of T-form as in the last table. The woods employed throughout are left in their natural

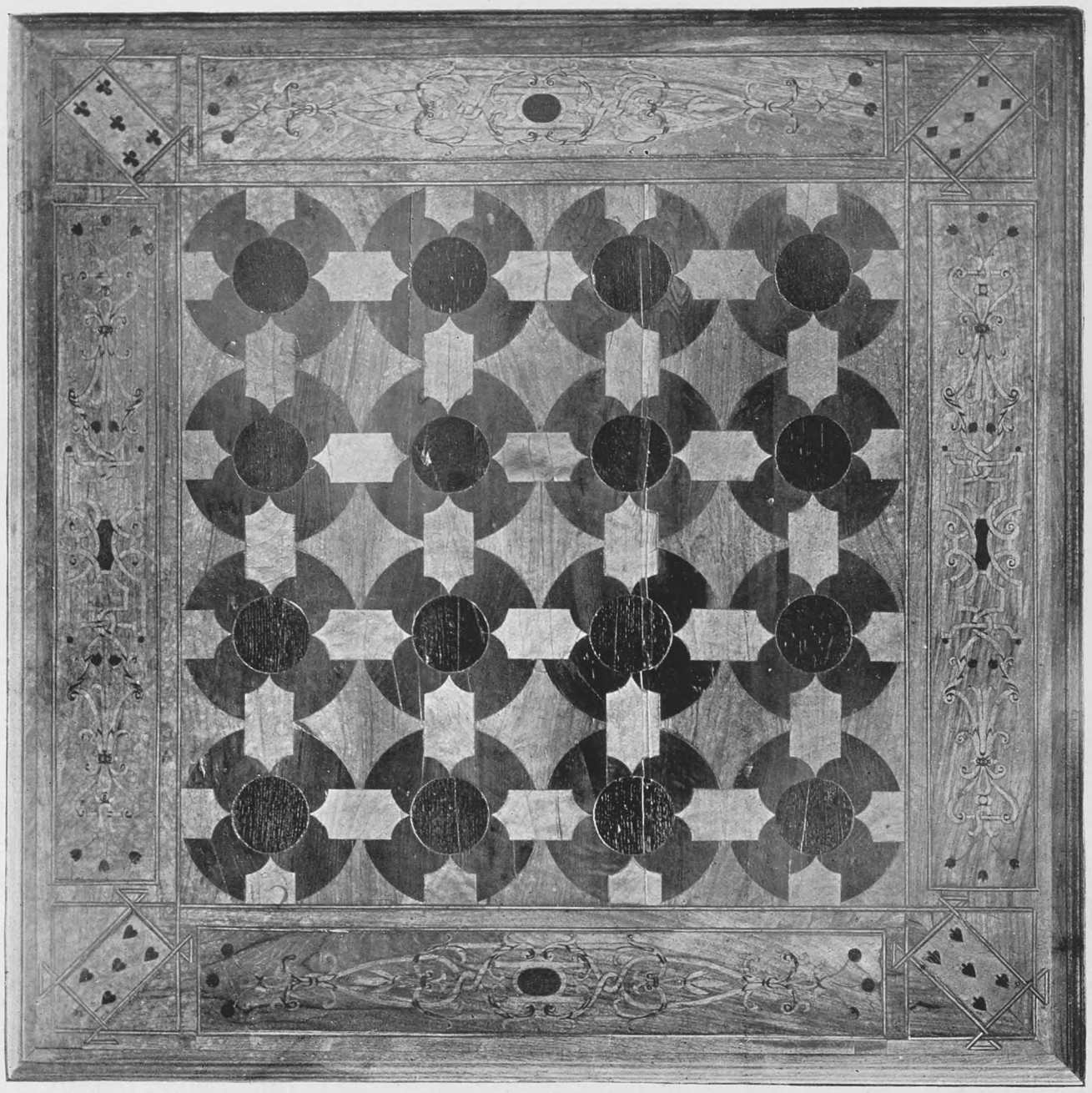


FIG. 84.—TOP OF TABLE INLAID WITH MARQUETERIE.
Length, 3 feet 4 inches; width, 3 feet 4 inches. Property of the DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE.

colours and no staining attempted. In both these specimens, and in other furniture of this date at Hardwick, the wood has faded to the colour of pale cinnamon, due to the flood of sunlight that for over three hundred years has poured into its vast rooms, through windows some 20 feet high. In the gallery, which is 167 feet long, 41 feet broad, and 26 feet high, the windows are composed of 27,000 panes of glass, the other windows on this same floor being of corresponding proportions. Bess of Hardwick



FIG. 85.—TABLE INLAID WITH MARQUETERIE. Same as FIG. 84. Height, 2 feet 10 inches.
Property of the DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE.



FIG. 86.—CHEST INLAID WITH MARQUETERIE. Height, 2 feet 10 inches; length, 5 feet 9 inches; width, 2 feet 4 inches.
Property of the DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE.

was comprehensive not only in her building but in other matters. Beginning married life at the age of fourteen, she not only managed to secure large fortunes with each of her husbands, but in the case of the third, who was by far the richest, she managed effectually to fix the inheritance upon herself and her own heirs for fault of issue by him, thereby excluding his brothers and his own daughter. The originality and power of this woman's mind is apparent throughout the construction and decoration of Hardwick; the first Chatsworth and Oldcotes were also results of her enterprise and genius, and she may well be termed the Master Builder of her sex. She died on the 13th February 1607, aged about eighty-seven.

Two other pieces of furniture connected with this lady are figs. 86 and 87. The first is an oak chest with drawers, much on the lines of the chest (fig. 57) belonging to St. Mary Overie. The front is inlaid and divided into two central panels framed in classical arches, on the keystones of which are the initials G. T. Within these arches the inlay represents views of buildings; the pilasters and panels on either side being also inlaid with floral scrolls and Tudor roses, all in coloured woods; the lower compartment of the chest opens in two drawers, decorated in a similar manner; the panels of the side and top are walnut inlaid in lighter woods, with the arabesque ornament of about 1560 to 1575. This chest was made for Gilbert Talbot, son of the Earl of Shrewsbury, who married in 1568 Mary Cavendish, Bess of Hardwick's daughter by her second husband, and it was probably a marriage coffer. This Gilbert Talbot is he who had the privilege of seeing Queen Elizabeth in her night attire, and who aired his views to his father in the letter already given. Fig. 87 was no doubt originally a long table with six legs cut down to fit a required position. The legs are early in shape and beautiful in proportion, and a comparison with those of the table (fig. 80) shows a step in the evolution of this form. The great interest, however, of the piece consists in a little iron ring attached to one of the legs, the actual ring to which Bess of Hardwick tied up her little dog.

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ENGLISH FURNITURE

The same question of origin with the early carved oak arises again in connection with the highly finished and elaborately inlaid pieces of furniture made between 1560 and the end of the century. The celebrated cabinet and stand (fig. 88) in the Victoria and Albert Museum is an instance of disputed nationality, though it has been for many years labelled as English. There are so many strong points between the stand of this cabinet and the Sizergh bed, that there can be but little doubt that the stand at any rate is of native workmanship. The inlaid border round the base, composed of portcullis and Tudor rose alternating, the capitals of the columns and their



FIG. 87.—TABLE, WITH RING FOR DOG. Property of the DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE.

STANFORD UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES



FIG. 88.—CABINET AND STAND INLAID WITH MARQUETERIE. VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM.

proportions, the inlaid arabesques in the spandrels of the arches, and the frieze into which the fleur-de-lys is introduced, together with the dentals and corbels that support the top, are all distinctly English in their simplicity, and it is these details that have ever raised the hope that the cabinet itself is also of English make; but there is no possible ground for attributing the marvellous little carvings in boxwood on the faces of the drawers, and the skill shown in the portrayal of the human form to this source. The whole design and execution of the façade is South German in feeling, and the costumes of the little figures are foreign in cut, and date the work as that of 1570. The marqueterie both on the open top flap and the inside of the drawers, in its free flowing lines and foreshortened strap-work, the colouring of the stained woods employed and the lock-plates, all strongly suggest foreign taste. The cabinet is decorated on all four sides, showing that it was intended to be placed in the centre of a room. It may very probably have been the work of a foreigner domiciled in this country, and the stand made a few years later by an Englishman, for it will be observed that there is no introduction of the Royal English emblems that are found on the stand on any part of the actual cabinet.

Plate VIII. of the same type, though much smaller, is entirely English in design and execution. This is evidently a writing-cabinet, as it is full of little secret drawers and cupboards, and implements connected with writing are inlaid on the slide that draws out. All four sides are decorated, showing that it was also intended to stand out in a room. The architectural façade is English, so are all the woods employed; on the outer doors are representations of warriors on horseback, riding in archaic meadows of green-stained holly, bordered with strap-work panels in a marqueterie of cherry, pear, and sycamore woods; the side panels are inlaid in the centre with a falcon, a cognisance of the Boleyns, repeated on the inside of the lid. The drawers are of deal, while in the foreign pieces of this kind, Hungarian ash is almost invariably employed. Inside

the top compartment is the little side-box always found in English chests of the time—the handles are all missing. The whole cabinet is of a beautiful golden colour, and there is a close analogy between it and the stand in fig. 88. It was originally in Hevor Castle, but in 1750, after a fire that took place there, when no doubt much of the furniture was hastily removed, it mysteriously passed into the hands of a yeoman farmer in the neighbourhood, and remained in their family until a few years ago. Traces of burning are distinctly visible on one of the doors. It is of the date 1580, and probably belonged to Mary Boleyn or her children, who inherited Hevor Castle.



FIG. 89.—SMALL WALNUT TABLE (FRENCH). Property of COLONEL GEORGE KEMP.

CHAPTER IV

A CAREFUL comparison of the St. Mary Overie chest (fig. 57), the Sizergh bed (fig. 66), the stand to the Victoria and Albert Museum cabinet (fig. 88), and that from Hevor (Plate VI.), shows a striking similarity of taste and style. The same passages of colour run throughout the three pieces, and although the causes that constitute charm in marqueterie render its reproduction in black and white very

unsatisfactory, the examples on the coloured plates have been chosen with the view of showing distinctly the development of the new taste, which also prompted the many coloured and embroidered clothes, made of small patterned fabrics, more frivolous in design than those of Gothic times.

The almost universal use of wainscot panelling as a wall decoration during Elizabeth's reign demanded more cheerful-looking furniture than the simple oak, which had by this time ceased to be painted and gilded; but all furniture was evidently still expensive and highly treasured, for a German, Samuel Kiechel, travelling here in 1585, wrote: 'The Royal treasures in furniture and tapestries are kept only in that palace in which for the time being the Queen resides; when she moves to another, everything is taken away and only the bare walls remain standing.' Other references to such removals are clearly indicative that the supply of these things, even belonging to royalty, was not yet large.

Many instances are found in inventories, of small and elaborate tables, but few of them appear to have been constructed in this country in the sixteenth century. The beautiful French specimen (fig. 89) was made from the design of Jacques Androuet Ducerceau, and proves how very far behind other countries we were in this matter. Ducerceau, engraver and architect, whose designs for furniture remain to this day pre-eminent in elegance and originality, after a sojourn in Italy, returned to the French Court in 1557, where his services were retained until his retirement in 1584. There is a table (fig. 90) at Hardwick directly inspired by his style, though known to have been constructed on the premises; it was possibly made by some of the foreign and English men working together in the employment of Bess of Hardwick, by that time Countess of Shrewsbury. It is of English walnut, but it is rash to presume that the Talbot hound-headed monsters supporting the table are carved by an English hand; the draw-top is also of walnut, inlaid with graceful arabesques and strap-work of holly and oak (a very English feature), with circles and irregular-shaped pieces of marble rather roughly



FIG. 90.—WALNUT TABLE WITH DRAW-TOP. Height, 2 feet 10 inches; length, 4 feet 10 inches; width, 2 feet 10 inches.
Property of the DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE.

introduced; the open spaces between this strap-work are inlaid with the fruits grown in England at that time. The frame is carved with an alternate nulling and flat acanthus which centres on all four sides in a plaque, roughly carved with lions' masks and festoons of fruit. All this ornament was originally gilt, but no varnish has ever been applied; the frame and top is supported on four hound-headed, winged female monsters, who terminate in scaled tails; between them rise graceful balustered supports, two of which are missing. These monsters lie on a deep stand of plain walnut, painted on the sides to imitate plaques of marble; this again is supported on four tortoises, very English in their carving. The top and stand are by a distinctly different hand to the centre of the table. Fig. 91 is a cupboard of oak and walnut, also made at Hardwick about 1570, under the same circumstances. The top, which is supported by brackets at the sides, is of walnut, framed in a more recent moulding, and inlaid with a strap-work of coloured woods, now much faded. The front opens in two doors of architectural design, and above is a drawer inlaid with marqueterie, the marble plaques being imitated in stained ash; in the centre is a handle formed by a lion's mask; the panels on either side framing the cupboard are inlaid with an arabesque design in light woods, all much faded. The plinth on which the cupboard stands is original; the marqueterie of the top and front corresponds in its somewhat deep and rough workmanship with other marqueterie found at Hardwick. The same sense of importance in all this better class of furniture is to be found in the standing buffet, also of about 1570 (fig. 92). This is of walnut and in two pieces. The front of the upper portion is composed of two panels opening as doors, inlaid with holly, in the same pointed arabesque design found on the top and sides of fig. 86. These panels are framed in a flat, deeply carved with a Greek key pattern, and outside this a projecting guilloche worked in darker walnut; the uprights of the framework are carved with a delicate strap-work; the bottom rail is in projection and boldly carved; the sides

are treated in a similar manner to the front. The general design bears an interesting resemblance to the simpler French work of the early years of Charles IX.'s reign, but it is less artificial and shows very distinctly the individuality of the new English taste. The lower portion or stand is some fifteen years later in date. Figures of women treated as caryatides support a frieze inlaid with floral arabesques in coloured woods; the shelf below is inlaid in a similar manner; the front, carved with a bold nulling,



FIG. 91.—OAK AND WALNUT CUPBOARD. Height, 3 feet 2 inches; length, 3 feet 7 inches; depth, 1 foot 10 inches. Property of the DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE.

rests on melon-shaped feet. The introduction of walnut into this better class of English oak furniture had towards the end of the sixteenth century found much favour, though the wood was evidently still scarce in this country; indeed every novelty that taste could suggest was greedily



FIG. 92.—STANDING BUFFET. Height, 4 feet 2 inches; length, 3 feet 10 inches; depth, 2 feet.
Property of SIR GEORGE DONALDSON



FIG. 93.—WALNUT SIDEBOARD. Height, 4 feet; length, 4 feet 1 inch; depth, 1 foot 7 inches. Property of E. A. BARRY, Esq.

adopted, and the nation seemed as eager for variety as the mind of its mistress. Harrison at the time wrote:—

'For now the furniture of our houses is grown in maner even to passing delicacie, and herein I do not speake of the nobilitie and gentrie onely, but even of the lowest sorte that have anything at all to take to. Certes in noblemens houses it is not rare to see abundance of arras, riche hangings of tapistrie, silver vessil, and so much other plate as may furnish sundrie cupbordes to the summe often times of a thousande pounde at the leaste, wherby the value of this and the reast of their stuffe doth grow to be inestimable. Likewise in the houses of knightes, gentlemen, merchauntmen, and some other wealthie citizens it is not geson to beholde generallye their great provision of tapistrie, Turkey worke, pewter, brasse, fine linen, and thereto costly cupboardes. But as herein all these sortes doe farre exceede their elders and predesessors, so in time past the costly furniture stayed there, whereas now it is descended yet lower, even unto the inferiour artificers and most fermers who have learned also to garnish their cupbords with plate, their beddes with tapistries and silke hanginges and their tables with fine naperie, whereby the wealth of our countrie doth infinitely appeare. Neyther do I speke this in reproach of any man, God is my judge, but to show that I rejoice rather to see how God hath blessed us with hys good giftes and to beholde howe that in a time wherein all thinges are growne to most excessive prieces we do yet find the meanes to obtayne and atchieve such furniture as here to fore hath been impossible.'

From these sentiments, written between the years 1577 and 1587, it is evident that the art of furnishing was occupying the serious attention of men's minds, and not only that great improvements in design and

execution were taking place, but that entirely new objects had been created, as, for instance, sideboards of double tier.

The first of these (fig. 93) is of walnut, about the date 1585. The top is extremely thin, for at this time cornices to court cupboards and buffets became lighter in their proportions. The frieze is plain save for a simple geometrical inlay, and finely carved lions' masks at the corners; the bulbous supports that show the cup and cover origin very clearly are delicate in execution, and prove the great advantages derived from working in walnut. The shelves and bottom rail are inlaid with a squared pattern in a lighter wood; the back is left open, and the whole construction represents an innovation. The same motive, though different in execution, is apparent in fig. 94, of Welsh make; this is of oak, and therefore of somewhat coarser touch, and though rich in effect, like all the oak furniture of Welsh origin, is lacking in finish. The cornice is very light, and neither the guilloche nor the lunette carving of the friezes show much originality, but the design of the supports is well considered. The open backs to these buffets were probably filled in with a rich piece of material as a background for the 'silver vessil' just mentioned. Another and later specimen is



FIG. 94.—OAK SIDEBOARD. Height, 4 feet; length, 4 feet 1 inch; depth, 1 foot 3½ inches. Property of LORD MOSTYN.


WARDTON

fig. 95, also of oak, and about the date 1625. The original top is missing; the upper frieze that forms a drawer is decorated with an arabesque strap-work of a rather earlier design ; the supports to this are slighter than the two previous examples, and the style of the carving is flat and small ; the front of the lower shelves are inlaid with a rough checker of marqueterie. The back supports are carved in low relief with a laurelled design ; the solid back is a modern addition, as are the bun feet on which the buffet stands ; this form continued to be made until about 1660. The comparison of this with the other two specimens is instructive, for although tradition of style is retained, the poverty of invention and execution is apparent, showing that by this time oak furniture had passed its apogee.



Fig. 96.—OAK DRAW-TABLE. Length, 4 feet 9 inches ; height, 2 feet 8 inches ; width, 2 feet 9 inches.
Property of Lady Augusta Mostyn.

Fig. 96 is an interesting form of drawer-table, almost of trestle form, and of Welsh manufacture. The length of the bulbous legs, headed by a



FIG. 97.—OAK TABLE WITH WALNUT TOP. Height, 2 feet 10 inches; length, 6 feet 9½ inches. Property of ARTHUR JAMES, Esq.

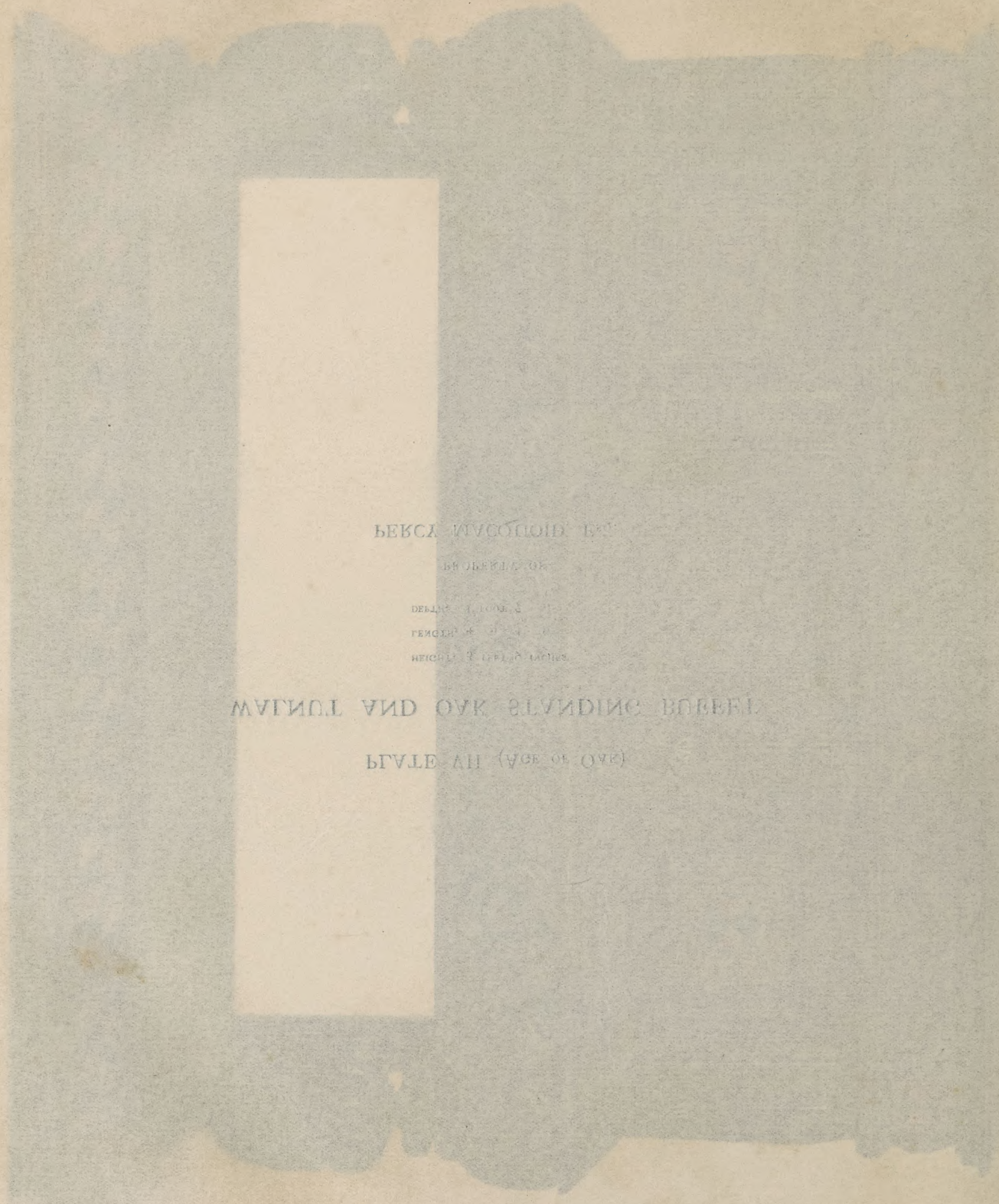


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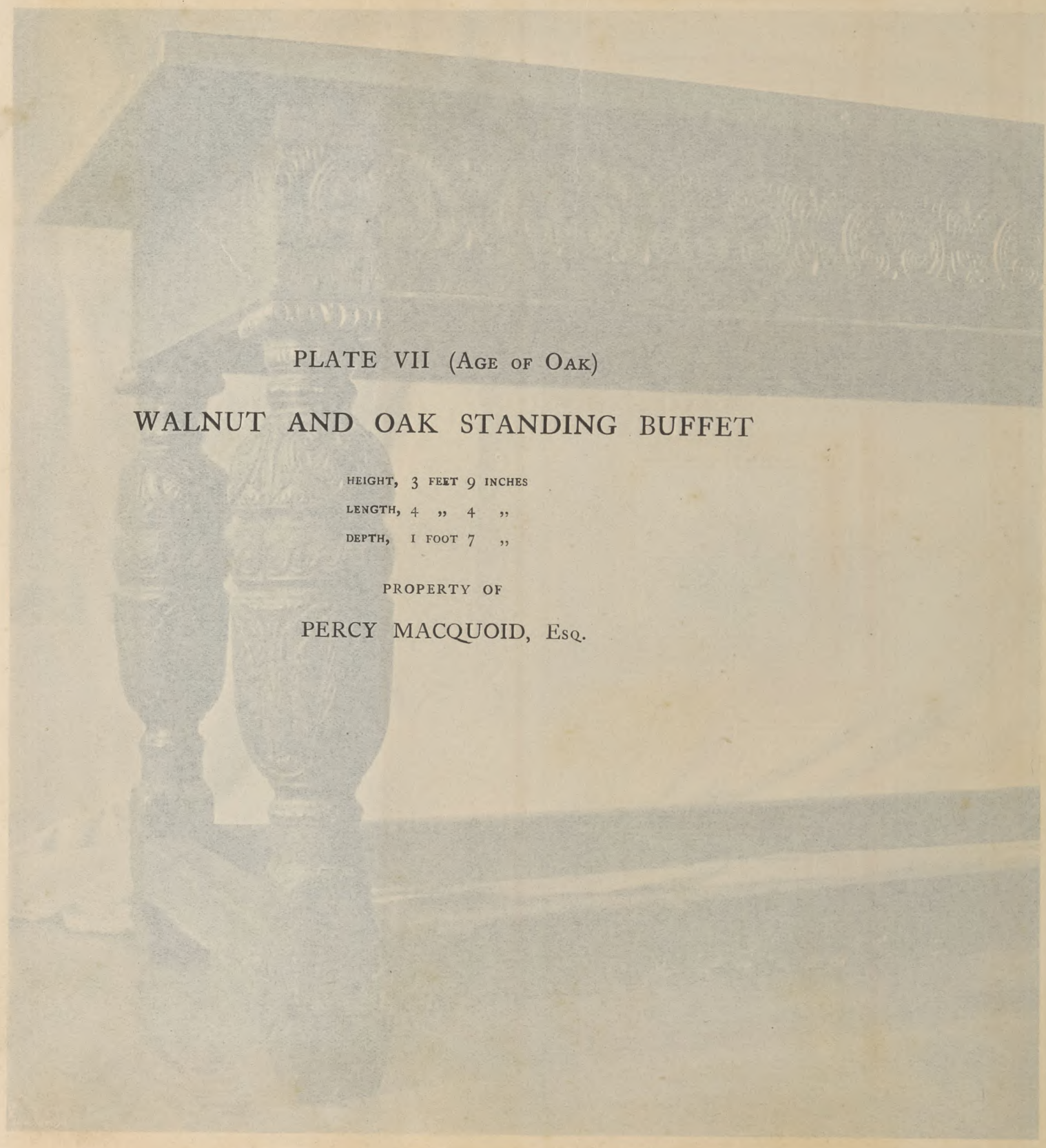


PLATE VII (AGE OF OAK)

WALNUT AND OAK STANDING BUFFET

HEIGHT, 3 FEET 9 INCHES
LENGTH, 4 „ 4 „
DEPTH, 1 FOOT 7 „

PROPERTY OF

PERCY MACQUOID, ESQ.

FIG. 97.—OAK TABLE WITH WALNUT TOP. Height, 2 feet 10 inches; length, 6 feet 9½ inches. Property of ARTHUR JAMES, Esq.

Shirley Slocombe



FIG. 98.—OAK STANDING BUFFET. Height, 4 feet 4 inches; length, 3 feet 2 inches.
Property of ERNEST CROFTS, Esq.

coat of arms, the scrolls and the bold simple nulling, point to the fashion of 1570; but as foreign design evidently filtered slowly into the Principality, types and fashion were irregular in their chronology, and did not always correspond in date with the contemporary work of the more enlightened English counties. The same type of long-shaped bulbous leg can be seen in the oak table (fig. 97) of Gloucestershire make of about 1575. Here the frame is carved with a semi-classical frieze in very low relief, repeated on the legs. This close rich carving, found in the western counties, is very distinct in style from the more open ornament and strongly defined lines shown in the carving of the northern and eastern counties. The base of this table is much decayed, and the blocks supporting it are modern additions. Plate VII. is a walnut standing buffet of about 1585. The top is thin, with a deep yet flat cornice of egg and tongue moulding above a frieze inlaid with a checker-work marqueterie of ebony, cedar, and holly. The front is divided into three panels, two of which open as doors deeply recessed, and inlaid with the same woods in simple geometrical designs; these panels are set in deep mouldings between stiles corbelled out in acanthus carving. The lower portion forms a stand with the top rail carved in a flat guilloche and forming a drawer: the legs are of walnut and bulbous in form; they stand upon a lower shelf also faced with a checker of ebony and holly. The panels at the back and the internal structure of the piece are of oak; the colour of it is rich, and the condition is untouched.

The so-called court cupboard held a very important position in the furnishing of a house; the term court was used in opposition to the word livery. The wine, dry food, and candles, used by the master and mistress and their family, were kept in the former; while the bread, cheese, butter, candles, and odds and ends pertaining to the servants' livery, *i.e.* wages, were portioned out, in what were called livery cupboards, which were of much rougher construction. The court cupboard gradually became very ornamental, a favourite variety having the top portion triangular in form,

with the roof forming a kind of canopy, supported on two uprights, somewhat bulbous in form during the latter part of Elizabeth's reign, but



FIG 99.—OAK COURT CUPBOARD. Height, 5 feet 2 inches; length, 5 feet; depth, 1 foot 8 inches. Property of ERNEST CROFTS, Esq.

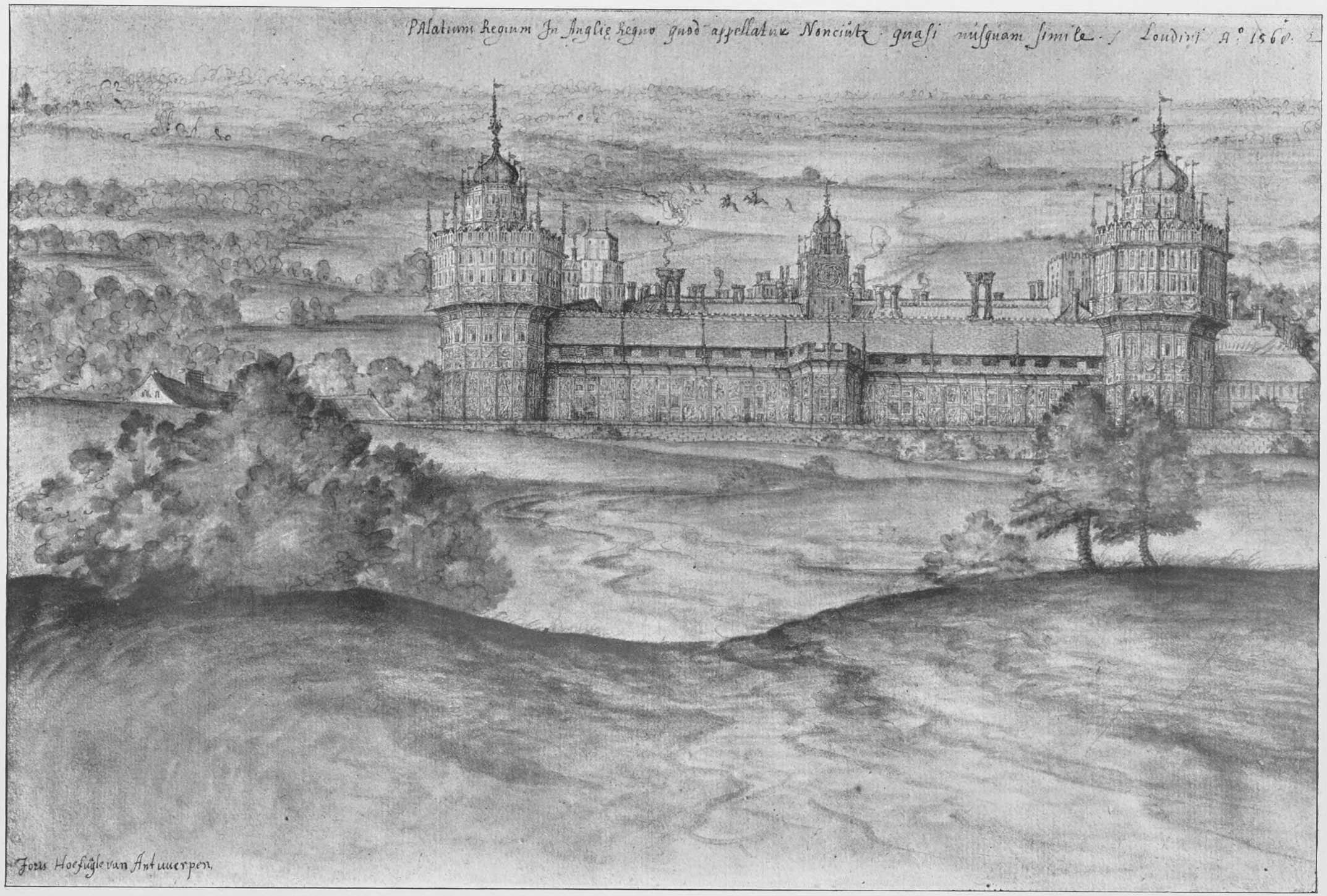


FIG. 100.—NONESUCH PALACE. From the original Water-colour Drawing by HOEFNAGLE. Property of MRS. ALFRED MORRISON.

becoming lighter in construction as the seventeenth century progressed. The lower portion generally opened in two doors; occasionally the doors were omitted, when the uprights above would be repeated as legs below, forming a combination of standing buffet and court cupboard. This combination is found in fig. 98, which is of oak; the upper structure is that of a court cupboard, while the lower portion, although not separate in construction, resembles the stand of a buffet. The cupboard is of triangular form, and the panels (the centre one forming a door) are inlaid in holly and bog oak; the bulbous supports have lost all traces of cup and cover form. The centre drawer is lightly carved with rosaces and inlaid with a checker border in marqueterie; the little wooden handles are original; a lower shelf, with a broad bottom rail of shallow carving, completes the structure, which is undoubtedly of eastern county manufacture, for the ancestors of the present owner were living in Suffolk in 1590, which is the date of the piece. The court cupboard (fig. 99) is from the same source, but made some twenty years later. The upper portion is triangular in form, the elaborate marqueterie of the panels being composed of a design of finches singing amidst conventional flowers; the bulbous and columnar-headed supports are plain, and the stopped flat channel moulding and open character of the carving show that the piece is not within the sixteenth century. The lower portion opens in a drawer and two cupboards, decorated with depressed arches supported by bulbous pilasters in high relief. The panels of the doors are inlaid with a charming design of birds and conventional flowers, and a small checker of marqueterie borders the rails and stiles.

The interest of Plate VIII. (*b*) is apart from its style and workmanship, for it has already been shown that marqueterie had attained to an art far beyond what is represented in this example, though there is a certain direct and rich decoration in the rather coarse inlay of the different woods that is most effective. The chest is of oak, light in colour, and inlaid with two panels of marqueterie representing a building framed at the sides

FIG. 100.—NONESUCH PALACE. From the original Water-colour Drawing by HOLLAR. Property of Miss Alfred Morrison.

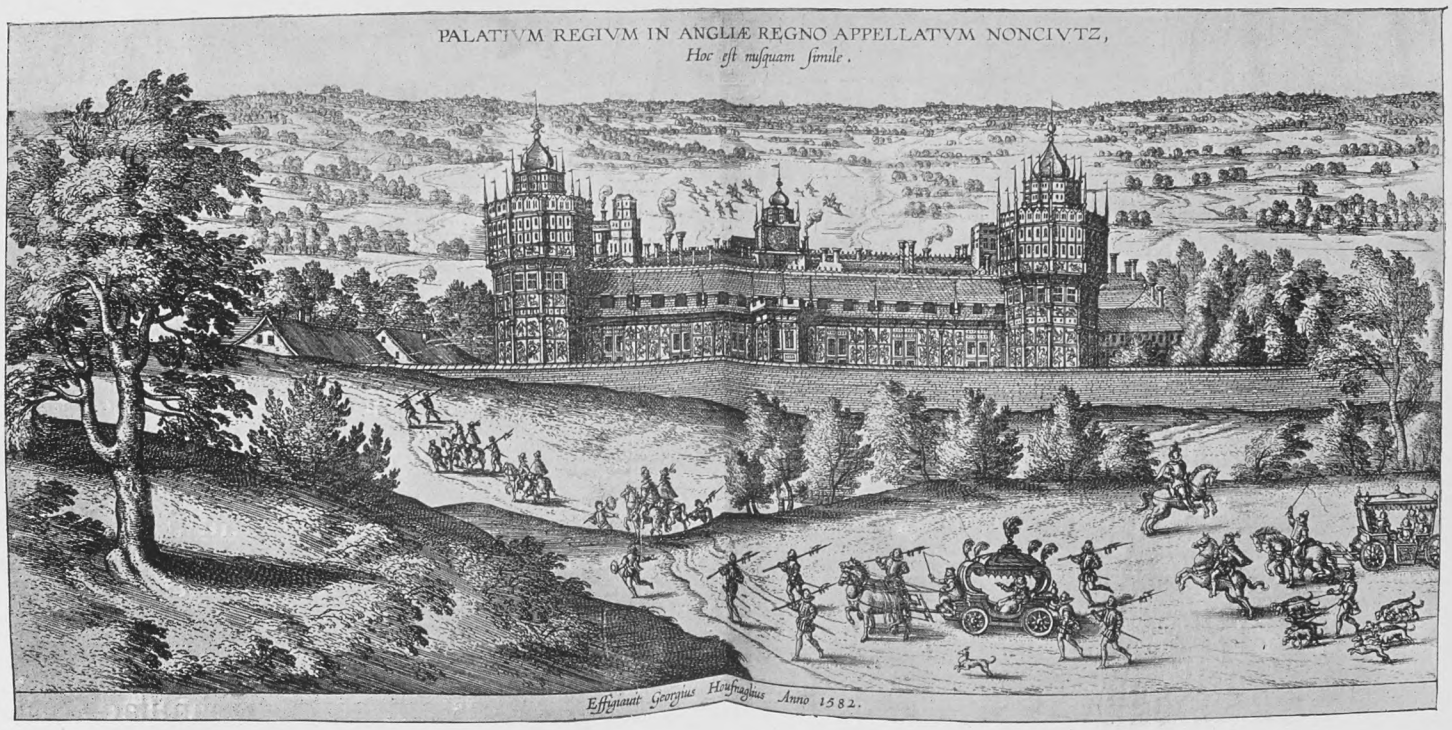


FIG. 101.—NONESUCH. (From Braun's *Cities*.)

in narrow upright panels inlaid with small lantern-topped towers; above and below runs a frieze representing dormer windows; the whole is contained within a bead and reel inlaid border, repeated on the top and sides; the centre panel bears the initials I. C., with the date 1592. This same house in inlay work is found on many chests of this date, and represents the celebrated Palace of Nonesuch at Cheam, that Henry VIII. built for himself towards the end of his life, from the designs of the Italian painter and architect, Toto del Nunziata, who lived over twenty years in this country.

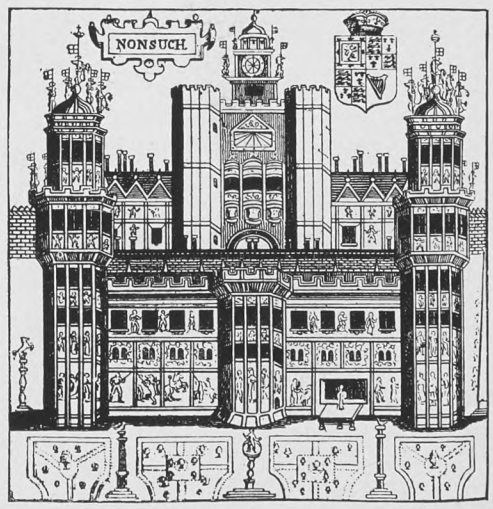


FIG. 102.—NONESUCH. (From Paul Hentzner's *Travels*.)

This remarkable building remained for upwards of a century the Aladdin's palace, that was considered one of the wonders of England. In 1555 the Earl of Arundel purchased the palace and park from the Crown, and completed the



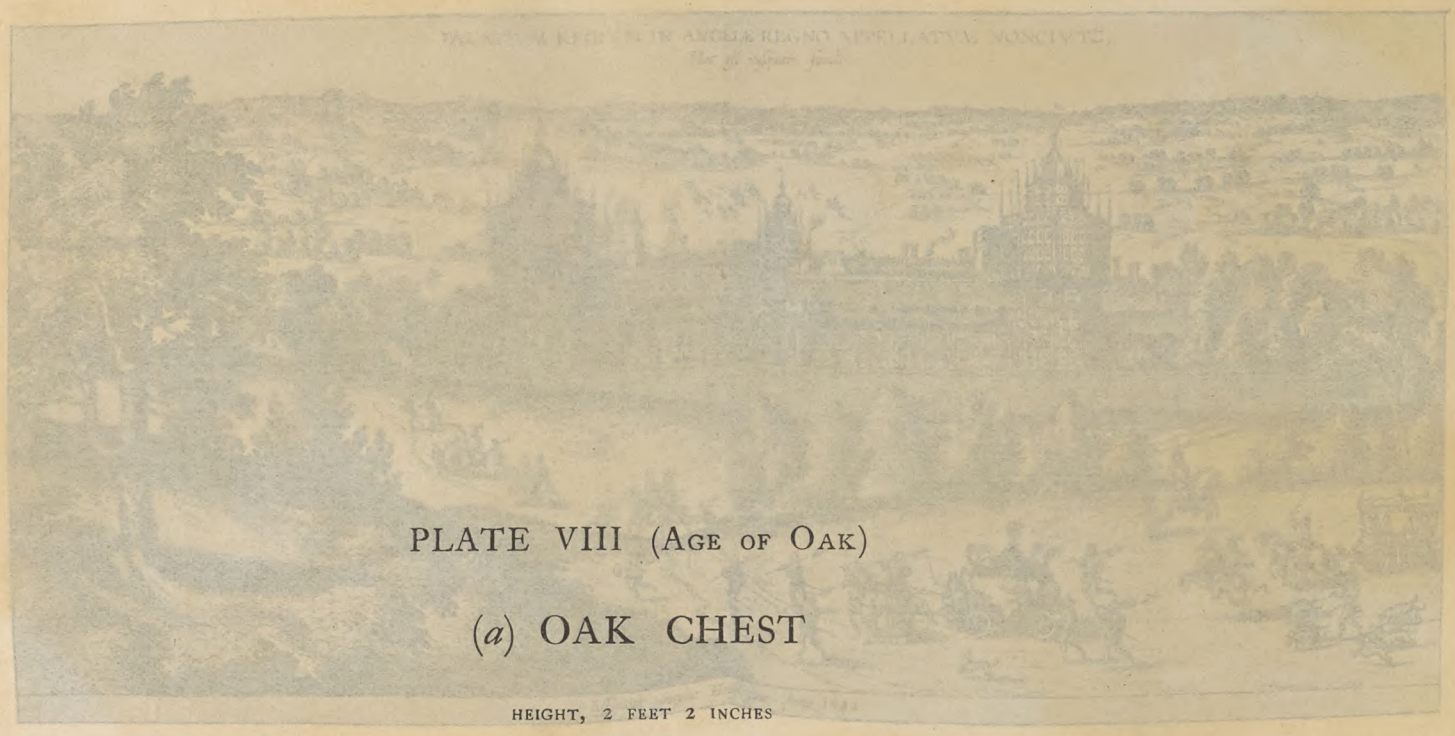


PLATE VIII (AGE OF OAK)

(*a*) OAK CHEST

HEIGHT, 2 FEET 2 INCHES

LENGTH, 3 ,, 5 ,,

DEPTH, 2 ,,

PROPERTY OF
SEYMOUR LUCAS, ESQ.

(*b*) OAK INLAID NONESUCH CHEST

HEIGHT, 1 FOOT 10 INCHES

LENGTH, 4 FEET

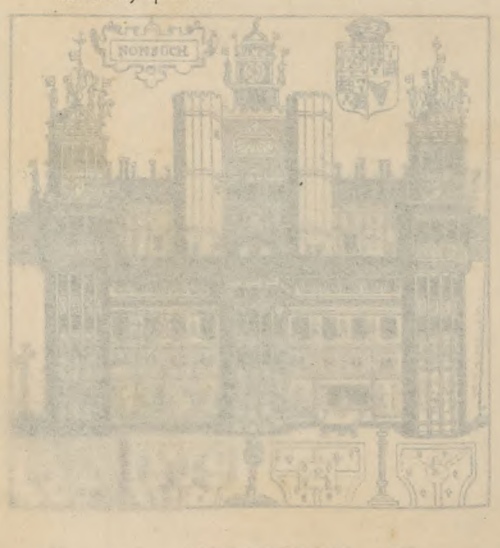


FIG. 102.—NONESUCH. (From Paul Hentzner's *Travels*.)





Shirley Slocombe



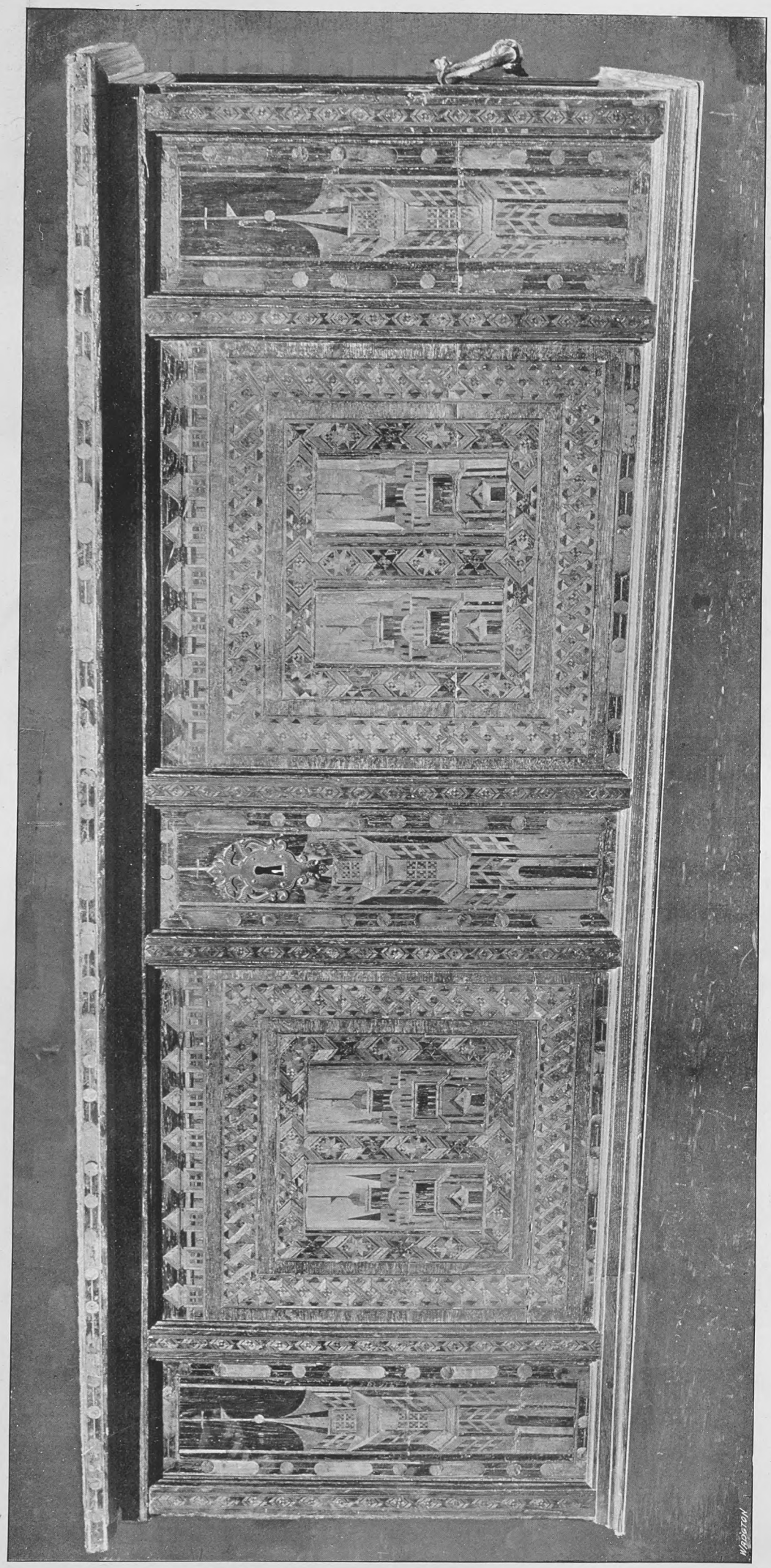


FIG. 103.—NONESUCH CHEST. Property of SIR ASTON WEBB.

unfinished building, in memory of his former master, Henry VIII. Queen Elizabeth stayed there on several occasions, and liked it so well, that she bought it in 1591 from the late Earl's son-in-law and heir, so that Nonesuch again became a royal residence; and we read that at the age of sixty-seven, the Queen, when there, 'was excellently disposed to hunting, for every second day she is on horseback, and continues the sport long.' There also the disgrace of Essex took place. Nonesuch remained in the possession of royalty until 1670, when Barbara Palmer was given the place and created Duchess of Cleveland and Baroness of Nonesuch; but this rapacious courtesan immediately proceeded to demolish the building for the value of the materials, till finally not a vestige of it remained.

Fig. 100 is from an original water-colour drawing of Nonesuch by Joris Hoefnagle, dated 1568. Fig. 101 is the reproduction, engraved by the younger Hoefnagle for Braun's *Cities*, published in 1582; and fig. 102 is the engraving that probably inspired the furniture maker of the time. The Duke of Saxe-Weimar visited Nonesuch in 1613, and in his diary noticed the exterior of the inner court, which was the part where Henry VIII. resided :—

'Beautifully and elegantly adorned with plaster work, representing the labours of Hercules and other histories; the other side, the Queen's lodgings, exhibited all kinds of heathen stories, with naked female figures.'

In the Survey of the Parliamentary Commissioners for 1650 we find :—

'The gate-house leading to the outward court is a building very strange and gracefull, being three stories high, leaded overhead, battled and turretted in every of the four corners thereof, the highest of which stories contains a very large and spacious roome very pleasante and delectable for prospect.'

John Evelyn, in 1665-6, writes :—

'I supp'd in Nonesuch House, whither the office of the Exchequer was transferr'd during the plague, and took an exact view of ye plaster statues and punchions of the outside walles of the court, which must needs have been the work of some celebrated



Fig. 104.—NONESUCH CHEST. Property of A. L. Radford, Esq.

Italian. I much admired how it had lasted so well and entire since the time of Henry VIII., expos'd as they are to the aire, and pitty it is, they are not taken out and preserved in some drie place; a gallerie would become them. There are some mezzo relievos as big as life. The storie is ye Heathen Gods, emblems, compartments, etc. The palace consists of two courts, of which the first is of stone, castle like, ye other of timber, a Gotic fabric, but these walls incomparably beautified. I observed that the appearing timber punchions, entrellices, etc., were all so covered with scales of slate, that it seemed carved in the wood and painted, ye slate fastened on the timber in pretty figures, that has, like a coate of armour, preserved it from rotting.'

Pepys in his diary also mentioned two visits to Nonesuch. September 21, 1665, he writes:—

'To Nonesuch to the Exchequer by appointment . . . a great walke of an elme and a walnutt, set one after another in order, and all the house on the outside filled with figures of stories, and a good painting of Rubens or Holbein's doing; and one great thing is, that most of the house is covered, I mean the posts and quarters in the walls, with lead and gilded. I walked also into the ruined garden.'

Unfortunately there is no mention of the furniture inside this interesting building.

Fig. 103 is a large chest almost six feet in length, with this same



FIG. 105.—NONESUCH CHEST. Property of FRANCIS DARWIN, Esq.

interesting decoration as Plate VIII., and probably by the same hand. The front is divided into five panels, those narrow and upright being inlaid with the lantern-topped turrets of Nonesuch in light wood on a dark oak ground, the windows of the turrets being represented in the darker wood; these are bordered with a wide bead and spindle inlay, and framed in stiles of the finer checker-work marqueterie, found between 1580 and 1600. The two large panels are filled with a repeated representation of the central portions of the house set in elaborate borders of checker-work. Along the top, and treated as a frieze, run the dormer windows, which in Hoefnagle's drawing surround the tops of the towers. The colour of the oak forming the construction of the chest is light; the top and sides are decorated with borders of inlay checker-work, and possess the original handles. On opening the lid, the original tinned hinges can also be seen, and a small hanging box on each side, faced with marqueterie. In fig. 104 a double portico entrance in projection is introduced, and in these a conventional design of flowering plants, probably emblematical of the celebrated gardens within the outer wall. At the side of these porticoes are introduced the Nonesuch turrets, and above are the ranges of dormer windows. The top and base of this chest are restorations, and although of the same date as the other specimens, it by no means represents the same state of preservation. Fig. 105 is another chest of this interesting make. In this instance the upper windows of the lantern towers are quatrefoiled, otherwise the same details are preserved.

A small chest of entirely different inspiration, though of about the same period, is (*a*) Plate VIII., and is unusually rich in effect and execution. The top is in two panels set in a flat, with simple bold mouldings. The front is divided into panels, by three pilasters of terminal figures of satyrs, on plinths, decorated with bunches of fruit; these panels are contained within classical arches, and are carved in high relief with figures representing Faith, who bears the cup and cross (the latter emblem having lost the top), and Patience, who holds the lamb in her arms.

Below the figures is a moulding in strong projection, and underneath are two long panels carved with the words Fides and Patienta. The sides are decorated with arches supported on vase-shaped pilasters, in the centre of which are the original iron handles. The carving of the figures, although coarser in finish than those found on corresponding and contemporary Flemish chests, are full of grace and spirit; the colour of the oak is very dark, and was no doubt stained at the time of manufacture. The design is a distinct departure from the usual decoration found in chests, but is in a style often met with in ecclesiastical work of the time.

This absolute diversity of taste is also shown in the two tables, figs. 106 and 107. The example with marqueterie is German in inspiration; while the carved specimen is of purely home origin. The former is of unusual shape and but 5 feet 3 inches long; the frame is inlaid with a checkered diaper of pear and cherry woods, set in a bold walnut nulling, with corners ornamented with acanthus; the oak legs are square, veneered with panels of walnut bordered with checker-work; a raised pendant, a favourite ornament towards the end of the century, being applied on the upper face of these legs, which are connected by the spandrels and heading of a depressed arch. Fig. 107 is also a draw-table, the top of which is a restoration; the frame is chestnut, carved with a spiral nulling which centres on both sides in a coat of arms, bearing over one shield the motto 'Foy est tout,' and over the other the date 1595; the ends bear a crest placed in similar positions. The foot-rail and legs are oak, the latter of bulbous form, yet refined with their bold capitals and carefully finished acanthus carving. This is the general type of table used throughout the end of the sixteenth century; it was continued with modifications until about 1660.

Fig. 108 is of the succeeding reign, about 1605. This table is of extremely neat workmanship and compact proportions; the frame is inlaid with a checker of marqueterie, but the shallow carving of the acanthus on the somewhat clumsy bulbous legs shows signs of the commencement

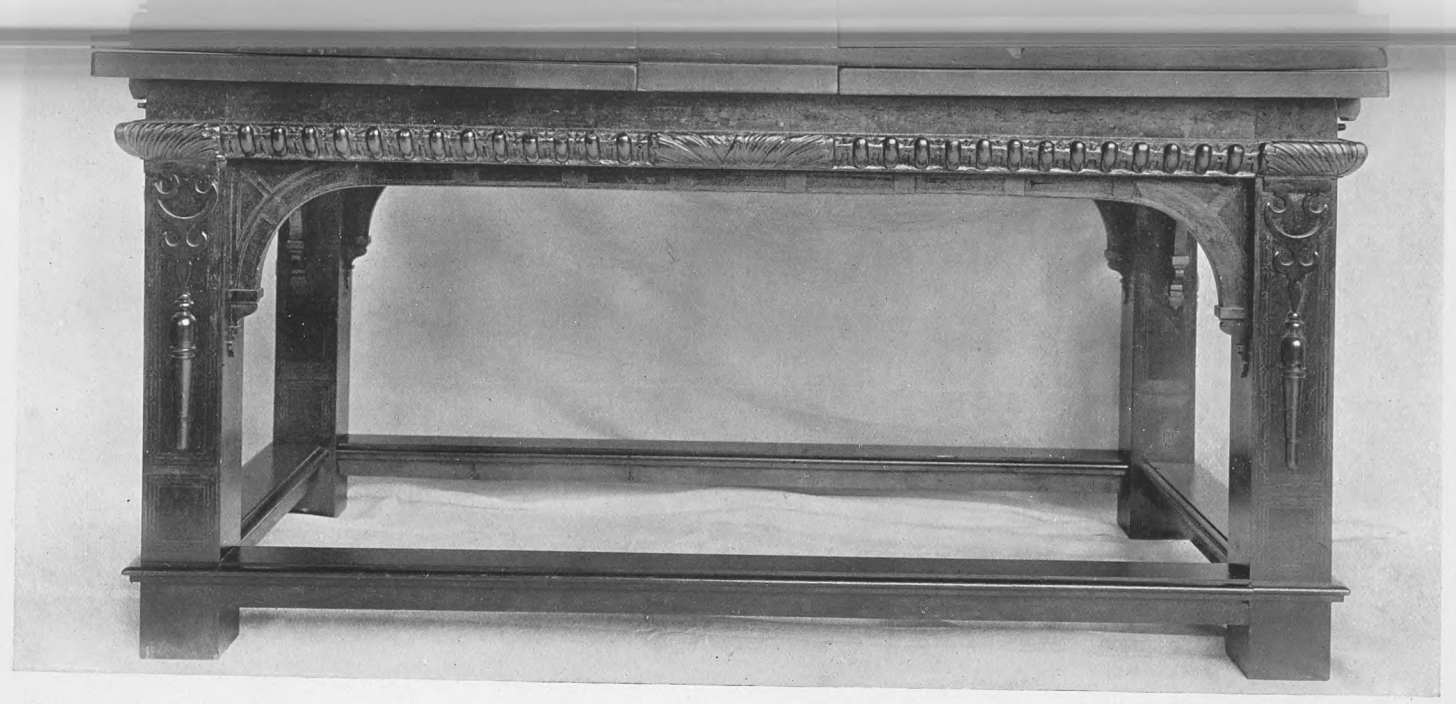


FIG. 106.—OAK INLAID TABLE. Length, 5 feet 3 inches; height, 2 feet 7 inches.
Property of SIR CHARLES LAWES-WITTEWRONGE, Bart.



FIG. 107.—OAK AND CHESTNUT DRAW-TABLE. Length, 7 feet 3 inches; width, 3 feet 8 inches; height, 3 feet 1 inch.
Property of SIR CHARLES LAWES-WITTEWRONGE, Bart.

of a decadence in the carved oak of this period. The beginning of a new order of taste was now about to make its appearance: the last traces of medievalism that were still faintly perceptible in artistic sentiment, even as late as the end of the sixteenth century, gradually ceased to be a natural form of expression, and what had hitherto been the occupation of cultivated intellects only, now became the stock-in-trade of the professional, and the hitherto noticeable self-effacement of the artist in every branch of his work rapidly became a thing of the past. A wave of eccentricity set in, and the royal Solomon, as James I. was called, set the fashion for trunk-hosen, jerkins, and doublets all preposterously stuffed and padded. This naturally affected the furniture, and the carved forms that had hitherto existed in bedsteads, chairs, and benches gave place gradually to elaborate upholstery. Owing to neglect, havoc by moth, and the constant wear on delicate materials, there are but few genuine, untouched specimens of this upholstered furniture of the beginning of the seventeenth century in existence. At Knole there are a few chairs, couches, and some beds of this period in their original condition. Of these, fig. 109 is a chair of wide X form, made in beech-wood; on this throughout is glued a foundation covering of red cloth, over which the chair is upholstered in a beautiful crimson and silver damask, now faded to a pale brick colour; the back divided into panels, by crimson and silver fringe, is studded at the sides with large gilt nails and headed by egg-shaped finials; the arms are also padded and fringed; the legs centre with a rondel of the silk material stiffly lined, and pointed with a gilt boss, in place of the lion's mask or rose found on earlier forms of this type; the curves of the legs are also far shallower, and the crescents at the lower extremities smaller than in the chairs of the preceding reigns. Another chair of this type and period (fig. 110), of rather smaller dimensions, stands in the same room. The back, which has lost its finials, is covered with plain aquamarine velvet, divided by broad bands of the same material, embroidered in a scroll-work of silver thread; down the centre and along

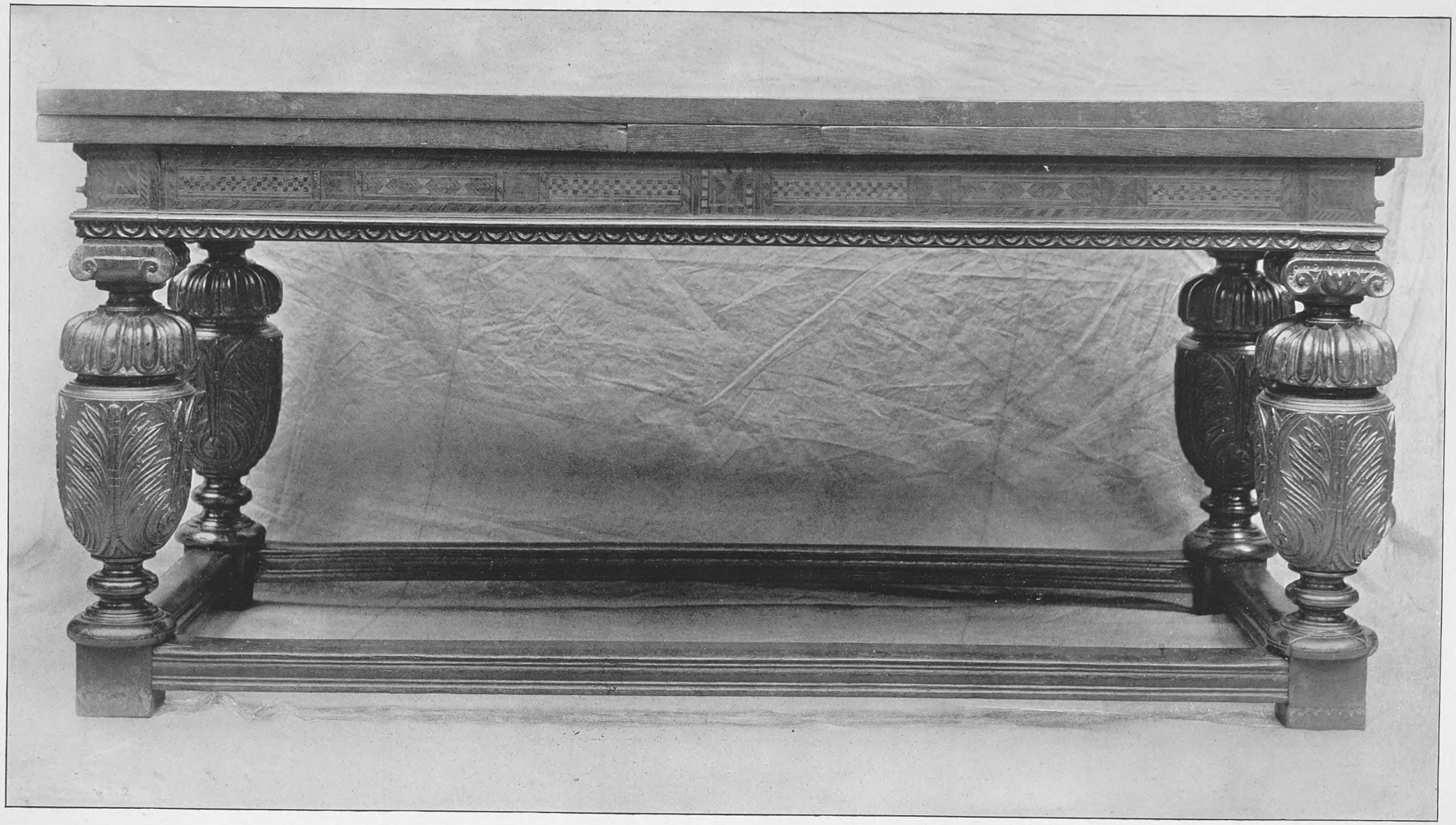


Fig. 108.—OAK INLAID DRAW-TABLE. Victoria and Albert Museum.

the top run a fringe of silver and faded silk, once bright salmon colour. These combinations of colour must originally have been very beautiful, and the effect of these brilliant coverings makes up for the loss of carved form in the wood-work. In this instance the legs are painted in a white design of flowers and bands, on a dull vermilion ground: the original loose cushion is missing; it was probably converted to the present stuffed seat, which is not in the original style of its upholstery. A portrait of James I., seated in a chair of this description, hangs in one of the rooms of the house. Fig. 111 comprises two footstools of this period, of similar construction to the chairs, but they have been re-upholstered at a later date.

Furniture, similar to the tables last mentioned and these chairs, was probably used by James I. and his Queen on the occasion of the banquet given on August 24, 1604, to Juan Fernandez de Velasco, Constable of Castile and Ambassador for Spain. The following account of this entertainment is translated from a contemporary Spanish pamphlet existing in the British Museum:—

'The Audience Chamber was elegantly furnished, having a buffet of several stages, filled with various pieces of ancient and modern gilt plate of exquisite workmanship. A railing was placed on each side of the room in order to prevent the crowd from approaching too near the table. At the right hand upon entering was another buffet, containing rich vessels of gold, agate, and other precious stones. The table might be about five yards in length and more than one yard broad. The dishes were brought in by gentlemen and servants of the King, who were accompanied by the Lord Chamberlain, and before placing them on the table they made four or five obeisances. Their Majesties with Prince Henry entered after the Constable, and washed their hands in the same basin. The Prince washed in another basin in which water was also taken to the Constable. Their Majesties took their seats on chairs of brocade with cushions; at the side of the Queen, a little apart, sate the Constable on a tabouret of brocade with a high cushion of the same; and on the side of the King the Prince was seated in a like manner. The principal noblemen of the kingdom were likewise at the table. There was plenty of instrumental music, and after the banquet, which was sumptuous and profuse, the King stood up and with his head uncovered drank to the health of the Constable and to the health of their Spanish Majesties. Immediately afterwards the Constable seeing that another opportunity might not be afforded him, rose and drank to the King, the health of the Queen, from the lid of a cup of agate, of extraordinary beauty and richness, set with diamonds and rubies, that he had brought with him,

praying his Majesty would condescend to drink the toast from the cup; and the Constable directed that the cup should remain in his Majesty's buffet. After many other toasts of this character from divers beautiful cups, the cloth was removed, and every one immediately stood up; the table was removed from the dais to the lower floor, and their Majesties proceeded to wash their hands at it. A ball, bull- and bear-baiting and tumblers completed this entertainment, followed by a supper.'



FIG. 109.—X CHAIR. Extreme height, 4 feet 5 inches; width, 2 feet 7 inches. Property of LORD SACKVILLE.



FIG. 110.—X CHAIR. Height, 3 feet 9 inches; width, 2 feet 6 inches. Property of LORD SACKVILLE.

The next entry in this interesting account is terse and suggestive:—

'Monday, the 30th.—The Constable awoke with a slight touch of lumbago.'

The luxury of feasting at this period was extreme, and we read that older courtiers of the preceding reign were shocked to see ladies and gentlemen of the present Court rolling about in a state of intoxication. Another writer of the time states:—

'Among these luxurious livers was the Earle of Carlile, that brought in the variety of ante-suppers, not heard of in our forefathers' time, and for ought I have read, unpracticed by the most luxurious tyrants. The manner of which was to have the table covered at the first entrance of the ghests with dishes as high as a tall man could well reach, filled with the choycest and dearest viands sea or land could afford, and all this once seen, and having feasted the eyes of the invited, was in a manner throwne away and fresh set on to the same height, having only this advantage of the other that it was hot. I cannot forget one of the attendants of the King, that at a feaste, made by this monster in excesse, eate to his single share a whole pye, reckoned to my lord at £10, being composed of amber greece, magesteriall of perle, musk, etc., etc.'

The gaiety and intellectual refinement of Elizabeth's time sank into low frivolity in the next reign; the unsettled state that dimly heralded the approach of civil war was not conducive to serious condition; and the licensed immorality of the Court gave no encouragement to the thoughtful creation of beautiful things: the oak furniture, therefore, that demanded individual interest and originality of thought, was but repetitions of the forms and methods of the preceding centuries; at first good, but gradually growing less and less interesting, and finally dwindling into poverty of execution.

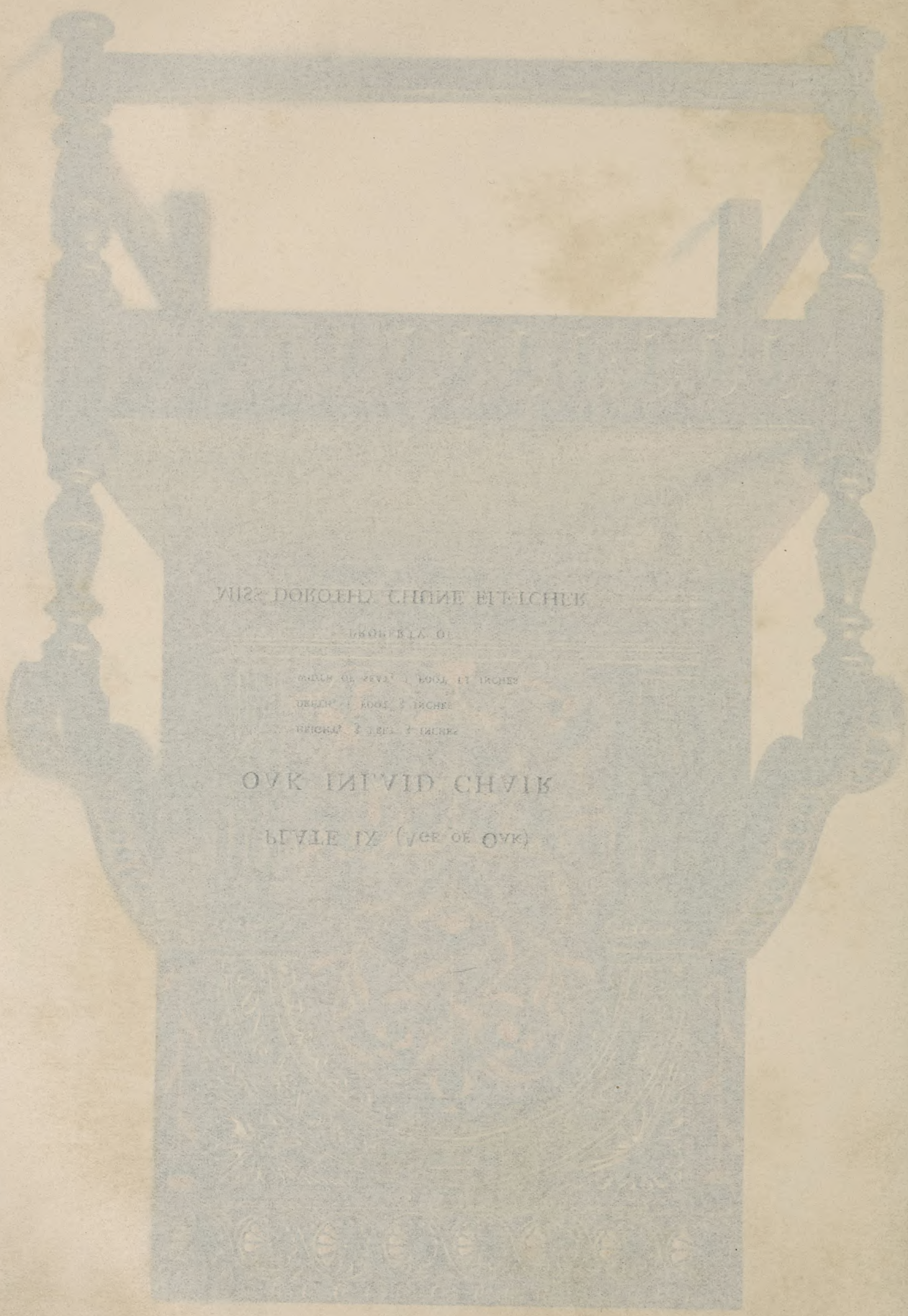


FIG. 111.—FOOTSTOOLS. Property of LORD SACKVILLE.

CHAPTER V

IN the back of the oak chair (fig. 112) of the beginning of the century, a pleasing sense of subdivision of proportion can be observed; the marqueterie of the panels is graceful in line and composed of the usual black and light coloured woods; the framing is also inlaid, which is unusual. The back is surmounted by the scrolled cresting, now rapidly becoming an important feature; the arms show a tendency to droop, and in this instance the supports, as well as the legs, are fluted; the latter being further decorated at the top, with a flower in marqueterie. This is a north country chair and very different in motive to fig. 113, which is of eastern county manufacture and rather earlier workmanship, about 1590. It is one of a pair, and possesses the additional attraction of being made in walnut. The arms do not roll over in the usual manner, but are tenoned into knopped supports; the moulding of the seat-rail and the marqueterie are applied, and not incised. The back panel is geometrically treated with a bold checker inlay, framed in a richly carved moulding; the cresting is small and surmounts a broad inlaid top rail, supported by side brackets; these chairs with geometrical inlay continued to be reproduced in Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex, until the end of the seventeenth century, and many are to be found used as altar chairs in eastern county churches.

The handsome chair (Plate IX.) belongs also to this early seventeenth-century group, and being represented in colour, gives a very good idea of the decorative effect of marqueterie. The introduction of inlay on the arms is rare, and only occurs at this period; the detail on the back panel much resembles that of fig. 112. Fig. 114, in which the foot-rail and



MISS DOROTHY CHLOE FLETCHER

PROPERTY OF

HEIGHT 3 FEET 2 INCHES

DEPTH 1 FOOT 2 INCHES

WIDTH OF SEAT 1 FOOT 11 INCHES

OAK INLAID CHAIR

PLATE IX (FACE OF OAK)

CHAPTER V

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PLATE IX (AGE OF OAK)

OAK INLAID CHAIR

HEIGHT, 3 FEET 3 INCHES

DEPTH, 1 FOOT 3 INCHES

WIDTH OF SEAT, 1 FOOT 11 INCHES

PROPERTY OF

MISS DOROTHY CHUNE FLETCHER



Shirley Slocombe

probably a cresting is missing, shows a carved diaper pattern on the arms, originally filled with marqueterie; and a raised back panel, with a deeply inlaid network of fleur-de-lys in the usual two-coloured woods; on the top rail are inlaid the initials E. R., with the date 1603. Another chair of west country make, but without any marqueterie, is shown in fig. 115. The cresting is a little more elaborate in design than is generally found at this time; the back panel is carved with a conventional flowering plant within an arch. The uprights, with their flat laurelling, and the carved oak seat-rail, are copied from an Elizabethan model.

It is difficult to assign an exact date to these chairs; but it should be observed that, up to the end of Elizabeth's reign, the top rail supporting the cresting is contained within the uprights, framing the back; and after this date it rests upon the uprights, and forms part of the cresting.

In the general shape of the chair there was evidently little variety, but occasionally one of the form of fig. 116 is to be found. Being cumbersome in construction and taking up much space, they have, in company with the early roughly constructed settles, been destroyed, but must have been popular for a time, from the middle of the sixteenth century, as they are frequently represented in scenes of domestic life in tapestry and engravings. They are the prototype of the later grandfather chair, and were no doubt made for the use of old people as a protection against draughts. This example of about 1600, from Hornby Castle, is of oak, and stands 5 feet 8 inches high. It is staved, the construction tapering towards the base, and the joints are concealed by long fluted mouldings, while the arms, which are carved on the top and sides, scroll outwards. The roof of the chair is supported by a Jacobean cornice (originally continued round the front, and heading a carved arch and spandrels); the mouldings of the base correspond with those of the cornice. On the inside edges, traces of nailing are visible, showing that the chair was at one time lined; it would then, with the addition of cushions, have been an extremely warm and comfortable seat.



FIG. 112.—OAK INLAID CHAIR. VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM.



FIG. 113.—WALNUT INLAID CHAIR. Property of SIR GEORGE DONALDSON.

ENGLISH FURNITURE



FIG. 114.—OAK INLAID CHAIR. Property of E. A. BARRY, Esq.

Indulgence in luxury at this period, consequent on a less dignified state of morals and manners, encouraged customs that in earlier and more austere times were considered undesirable; and society of the sixteenth century would have regarded with surprise the use of a piece of furniture on which the occupant reposed at full length in public. But the growth of day-beds, as they were called, did not become general till after the Restoration, developing at the end of the century into the form known as 'sopha,' a term of Eastern origin. Fig. 117 represents a very early form of day-bed of about the date 1600, preserved in the long gallery at Hardwick. The structure is of oak, with two panelled ends that have an outward rake, the space between them at the top measuring 7 feet 3 inches. The oak is painted a deep chocolate red, and upon this runs a floral arabesque in white, red, and green. In the centre of each of the

upper panels are painted the arms of Bess of Hardwick, Countess of Shrewsbury, with those of Cavendish and Talbot, surmounted by a countess's coronet. On the face of the stiles framing these panels, baluster-shaped pendants are applied, and the top rail is supported by the little ears or brackets found on chairs of this period. The cushion, which is 6 feet 6 inches long, 3 feet wide, and 2 feet 3 inches from the ground, is covered with a deep rose damask of almost Gothic design, and is embroidered most elaborately on both sides in coloured silks and gold thread, the outside of the design being edged with a white cord. It is all much damaged, and has been repaired in many places with a silk damask of William III., of which the valance is now composed, but which originally would have matched the embroidered cushion. The head cushions, in a graduated set, are also missing.

The reckless extravagance displayed at this time in the upholstery and embroidery of furniture and costume is unparalleled in our history. In a letter from John Chamberlaine to Mrs. Alice Carton, written February 4, 1612, we read :—

'About this day sevenight the Countess of Salisbury was brought a bed of a daughter, and lyes in very richly, for the hangings of her chamber being white satin, embroidered with silver and pearl, is valued at fourteen thousand pounds.'

This would be equivalent to at least £50,000 of our money.



FIG. 115.—OAK CHAIR. Property of ARTHUR JAMES, Esq.



FIG. 116.—OAK GRANDFATHER'S CHAIR. Property of the DUKE OF LEEDS.

An untouched example of a state bed and hangings of this description, and of about this same date, is shown in fig. 118, and thoroughly typifies the profligacy of the period. The posts are slight and covered with deep coral taffetas, for the large carved posts were no longer in fashion for important beds, and were now quite plain, covered with material, and lost in the voluminous folds of the rich curtains that surrounded them. The valance to the tester is pure cloth of gold, of an early seventeenth-century design, edged at the top and bottom with a tasselled fringe of gold and silver : in each tassel is a coral tuft of silk, with a black centre. Ostrich plumes, springing from vases covered with cloth of gold, ornament the four corners. The inside of the tester and hangings are shown in fig. 119. They are of deep coral taffetas silk, profusely embroidered with a bold floral design in gold and silks ; the heading is embroidered in very high relief, with floral scrolls in gold and silver, surmounted by a royal crown.

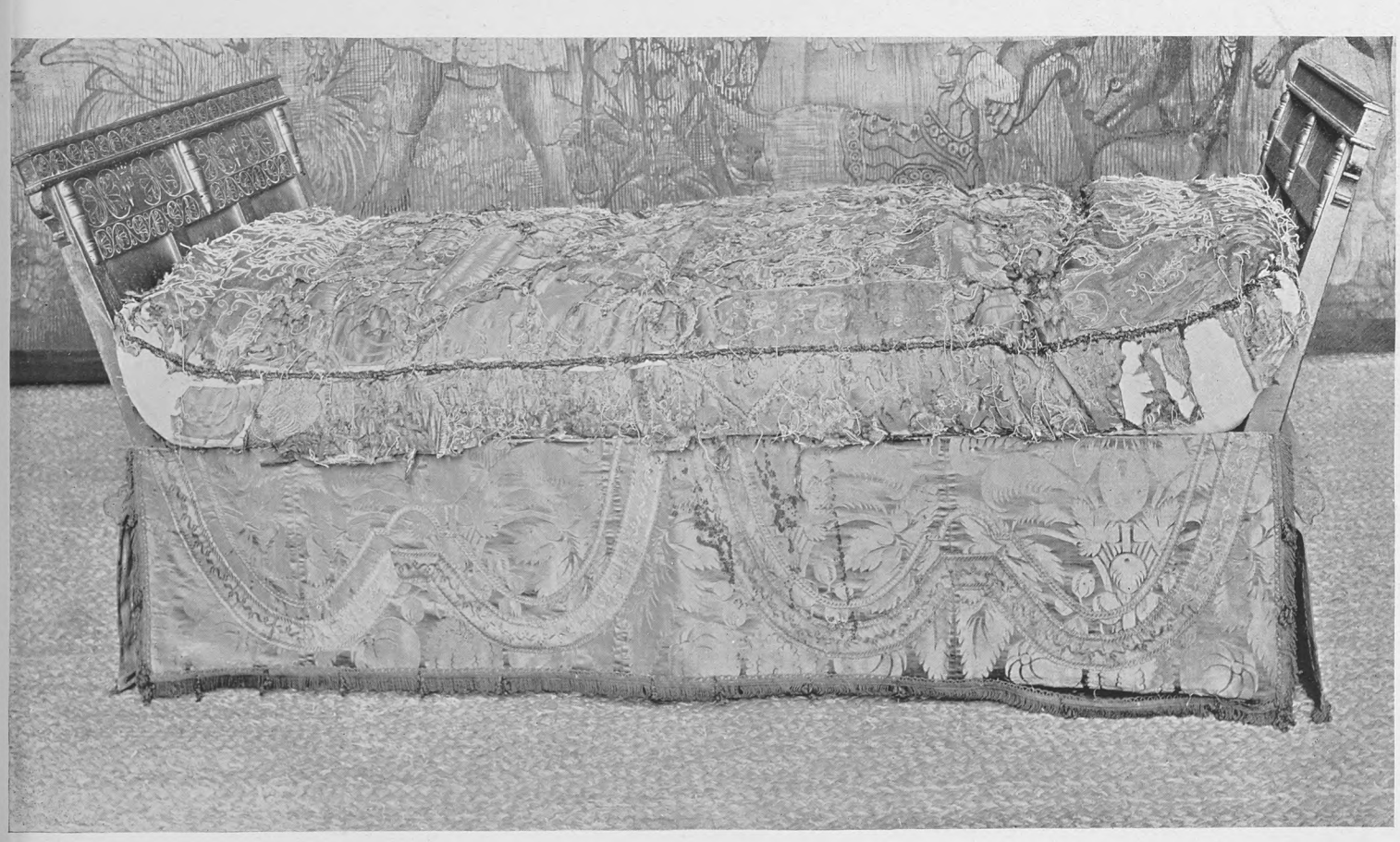


FIG. 117.—DAY-BED. Property of the DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE.



FIG. 118.—STATE BED. Height, 12 feet ; width, 7 feet 6 inches. Property of LORD SACKVILLE.



FIG. 119.—INSIDE OF STATE BED. Property of LORD SACKVILLE.

T

The pillows and quilt are of coral taffetas, now faded to a dull cream, and worked in the same manner. On lifting the fringe that trims the quilt it can be clearly seen that the metal it is composed of is alternately gold and silver; and under this heavy fringe, the silk that has been entirely protected from the light, keeps still its original burning coral colour. The curtains are of cloth of gold, lined with the embroidered taffetas, the lower valance being of the same. The feet of the posts, which are detachable, show traces of original gilding, and are in the form of lions couchant. It is impossible by description or illustration to convey any idea of the magnificence of this bed, and the impression it must have created when new. It was prepared for the reception of James I. by Richard, third Earl of Dorset, at the cost of £8000; and if this king at all resembled the following description of him, written by his contemporary, Sir Anthony Weldon, the contrast between the bed and its royal occupant must have been startling:—

'He was of middle stature, more corpulent through his cloathes then in his bodie, his cloathes ever being made large and easie, the doublets quilted for stiletto proof, his breeches in great pleits and full stuffed; his eyes large, ever rowling after any stranger that came in his prescence, insomuch as many for shame have left the roome, as being out of countenance; his beard very thin; his tongue too large for his mouth, which ever made him drink very uncomely as if eating his drinke, which came out into the cup on each side of his mouth; his skin was as soft as taffetas sarsnet, which felt so, because hee never washt his hands, onely rubbed his fingers ends slightly with the wet end of a napkin.'

Authentic portraits of this king are rare, as he had a great dislike to sitting for this purpose, and as his tastes were not directed towards any form of art, the demand for beautiful furniture languished at a Court where the pleasures of the monarch were confined to buffoonery with his favourites, eating and drinking, what he was pleased to call state-craft, and hunting. Although a singularly bad horseman, he was inordinately fond of the latter pastime; this is shown in a letter from Mr. Joseph Meade to Sir Martin Stukville, dated January 11, 1622, and also refers to another bed in connection with the King:—

'The same day his Majestie rode by coache to Theobalds; after dinner, riding on horseback abroad, his horse stumbled and cast his Majestie into the new river where

the ice brake; he fell in, soe that nothing but his boots were seen. Sir Richard Young was next, who alighted, went into the water and lifted him out; there came much water out of his mouth and body. His Majestie rid backe to Theobalds, went into a warm bedde, and as we heare is well, which God continue.'

Fig. 120 is a portion of some curtains belonging to a small bed of this same upholstered style and period at Berkeley Castle. The material is a heavy scarlet cloth, embroidered in yellow cord and silk, with a vine pattern, the grapes and leaves being of raised black velvet. The curtains, tester, valances, as well as the entire hangings of the wall of the room, are all of the same material and work. These upholstered beds at this period were often made to match the wall-hangings; but owing to their great

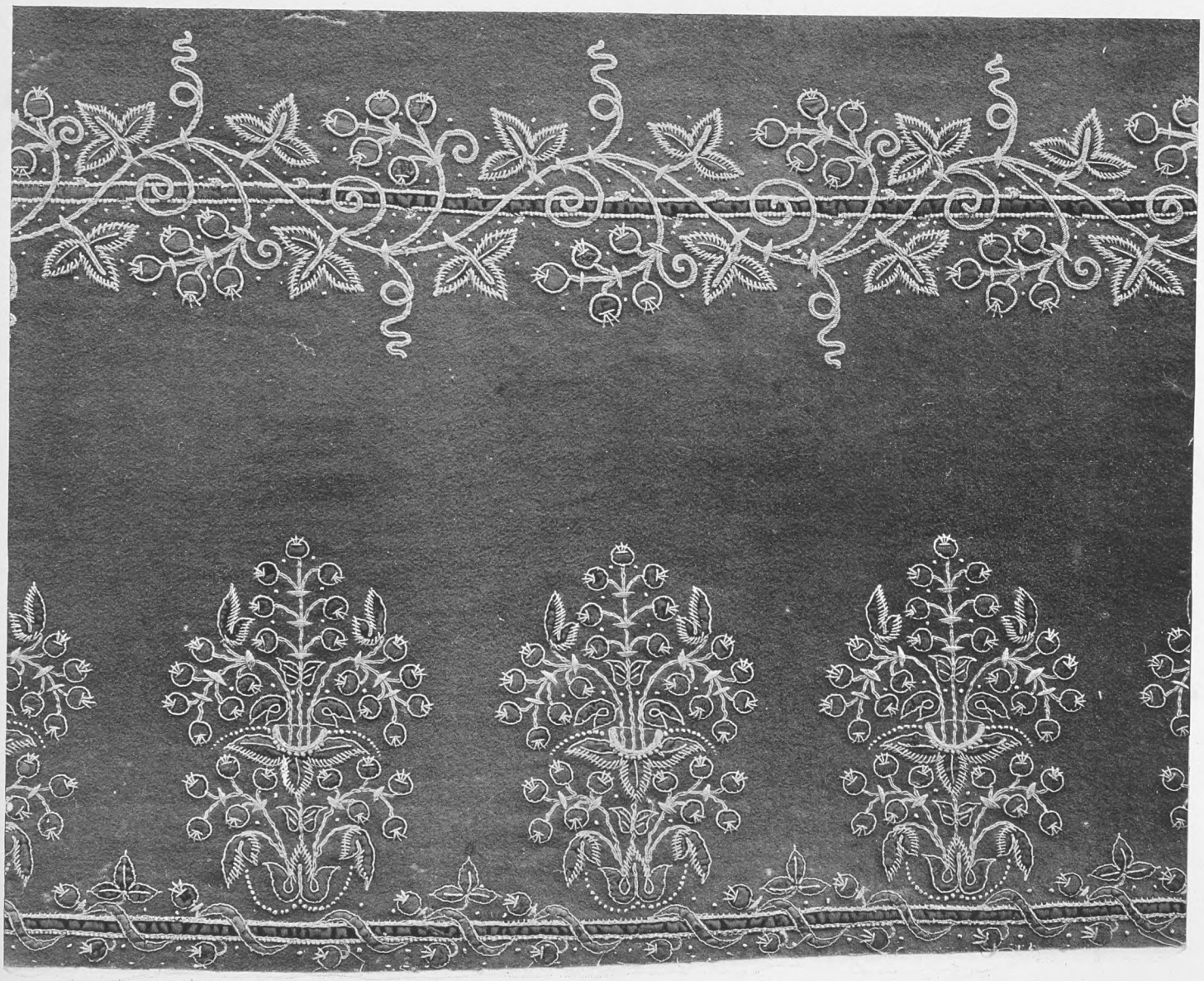


FIG. 120.—PORTION OF EMBROIDERED CLOTH BED-HANGINGS. Property of LORD FITZHARDINGE.



Fig. 121.—OAK STOOL.

cost, were few in number, and only used at Court or by the very wealthy, and carved oak bedsteads continued to be made till Charles II.'s reign.

In the Verney Letters there is a mention of a black mourning bed and hangings made for a widow in 1638, when the whole of the room was hung with black and the furniture covered with it. A list of thirteen 'pieces' is mentioned, 'blacke clothe hanginges three yardes deepe and foure and a halfe yardes longe,' and two others 'three yardes deepe and three yardes longe.'

Ordinary bedrooms still remained scantily furnished till about 1630, for it was not until then that the new forms, such as hanging cupboards, and chests with drawers, were introduced. A large amount of furniture was, however, constructed between 1600 and 1650 for ordinary households. The population of England had grown greatly during Elizabeth and James I.'s reigns, and we find continual reference to the vast amount of oak employed for building materials, joiner's work



Fig. 122.—OAK STOOL. Height, 15 inches; length, 15 inches. Property of Morgan Williams, Esq.

and furniture, although the greater part of the oak for wainscot panelling was not grown in this country, but imported from Denmark, with whom we then were in close alliance. Harrison wrote of that time:—

'Altho' I must needs confess that there is good store of great wood or timber here and there even now in some places of England, yet in our days it is far unlike to that plenty which our ancestors have seen heretofore when stately buildings were less in use. For albeit that there were then greater number of messuages and mansions almost in every place, yet were their frames so



FIG. 123.—OAK STOOL.



FIG. 124.—OAK STOOL.

slight and slender that one mean dwelling house in our time is able to countervail very many of them, if you consider the present charge with the plenty of timber that we bestow upon them. In times past, men were contented to dwell in houses built of sallow-willow, plum-tree, hard-beam, and elm, so that the use of oak was in a manner dedicated wholly unto churches, religious houses, princes' palaces, noblemen's lodgings and navigation, but now all these are neglected, and nothing but oak any whit regarded. Of all oak growing in England, the park oak is the softest and far more spalt and brittle than the hedge oak. And of all in Essex, that growing in Barfield Park is the finest for furniture and joiner's craft, for often times have I seen of their works made of that oak as fine and fair as most of the wainscot that is brought hither out of Denmark, for our wainscot is not made in England. Nevertheless,

in building, the hedge, as the park oak, go all one way, and never so much hath been spent in a hundred years before as in ten years of our own time.'

The possibility of obtaining oak at a lower price than formerly is shown by the words of another writer, a few years later :—

'But the sale of crowne timber appeared of sadest consequence to the safety of the nation, in relation to the navy, the walles of the kingdome. English oake being then esteemed of as best for a sea fight, not being apt to cleave upon the receit of a shot, but rather boare : and of these millions were felled and sold at vile prizes, not only during the life of the Earle of Salisbury, but alle the raigne of King James.'

This enormous quantity of oak thrown upon the market, in conjunction with an increasing demand for furniture, produced results that can be compared to the output of a modern furniture establishment, where everything is made in dozens.

An article of furniture that found its way into every cottage and house was the joint-stool, of which many thousands must have been manufactured. By a comparison of the following examples, it is easy to see that deterioration was taking place, as the supply and demand increased. Fig. 121 is a joint-stool of Elizabeth, about the year 1565; the frame, which is well carved in a guilloche, finishes on the lower side, in a widely divided nulling cornered with rough acanthus; the legs show the early and restrained bulbous form, the gadrooning being concave. Even the proportions of this small and comparatively unimportant piece are thoughtful, and a certain amount of grace is thereby attained. Fig. 122 is of extraordinary strong construction. The top framing, an inch thick, is sufficiently deep to form a box; this framing is carved on all four sides with the well-known Jacobean channelling. The hasp and lock do not show in the illustration, being on the further side; the legs are short, with a wide spread, but full of character; the date is about 1600. Fig. 123 is a stool twenty-five years later; this also is somewhat square in form and departs from the ordinary pattern of joint-stool. The top moulding is rather elaborate, and the legs still preserve a certain amount of character, as do those of the taller stool (fig. 124), which is of about the same date, 1640, and altogether superior to the stool (fig. 125) of Cromwell's time, which resembles the furniture of its period.



PLATE X (AGE OF OAK)

OAK STANDING BUFFET

HEIGHT, 4 FEET 4½ INCHES
LENGTH, 4 „ 3 „
DEPTH, 1 FOOT 8 „

PROPERTY OF
EDWARD QUILTER, ESQ.



Shirley Slocomb



FIG. 125.—OAK STOOL.

CHAPTER VI

IT is impossible in a work of this size, dealing with evolution, to represent a series of objects of entirely different form and purpose, and at the same time preserve their chronological sequence; it will therefore in many instances be necessary to revert back to certain kinds of furniture, in which evolution was only carried so far as uniformity in style permitted.

It has been shown that imitations of the lighter forms of imported foreign cabinets, such as Plates V. and VI., were made here, but cabinets of entirely native origin at the beginning of the seventeenth century were still confined to varieties of the buffet and court cupboard. Plate X., of about 1605, represents a combination of these two types, and the comparative lightness of construction shows that it was intended for the

parlour, a room that at this date was coming into general use for meals, rather than for the hall, which had hitherto been used for this purpose, and where the heavier type of court cupboards were placed. The upper portion, as in earlier specimens, is three-sided in plan, and composed of



FIG 126.—OAK STANDING CUPBOARD. Height, 4 feet 6 inches; length, 4 feet 10 inches; depth, 2 feet 1 inch. Property of MORGAN WILLIAMS, Esq.



FIG. 127.—OAK COURT CUPBOARD. Height, 5 feet 5 inches; length, 4 feet 7 inches; depth, 1 foot 9 inches. Property of MESSRS. GILL AND REIGATE.

three panels, inlaid with elaborate marqueterie framed in carved arches of depressed form, the centre panel opening as a door. Above rises a carved and inlaid frieze, divided into two portions by carved corbels and headed by a dental cornice. This is supported at each end by a group of slender columns on plain plinths; the lower part of this buffet is headed by another inlaid frieze forming a drawer, and the face of the shelf beneath is carved with a flowering arabesque design. The legs are large in proportion and faced with bands of walnut, on which are applied pendants and heart-shaped bosses of the same wood, one of them forming a clutch in the centre of the drawer. The whole piece is rich in colour, of more elegant shape than is customary, and of eastern county manufacture.

Another variety of the more solid type of cupboard, a few years later in date, is shown in fig. 126. It is of oak, five-sided, and without any marqueterie. The top and lower panels of the front are richly carved in low relief with a design of subdivided circles, a Jacobean adaptation of a Gothic motive, the side panels being also carved, and framed in a flat roping of the same character; the long centre panels open in a drawer and two flaps, on which are carved initials; the extreme outside panels are plain. The rails and stiles throughout are bordered with a Jacobean reed moulding, and the bottom rail is cusped, finishing in each point with a cross. The lock and hinges, of Gothic form, are most effective, and are contemporary with the piece. Being an adaptation from more than one style, its date must necessarily be uncertain, but it is approximately about 1616. It is quite exceptional in form and construction, and its condition is untouched.

In early Jacobean court cupboards, the drawer surmounting the lower part is often omitted. Fig. 127, of about 1618, is a tall specimen in which the cornice is extremely shallow; but the bulbous uprights supporting it, as well as the frieze, are early in character and carving; this frieze is flat in execution, and the lower portion is entirely Jacobean in feeling. The upper and lower panels are filled with a geometrical



FIG. 128.—OAK COURT CUPBOARD.
Height, 7 feet 4 inches; length, 5 feet; depth, 1 foot 9 inches. Property of SIR GEORGE DONALDSON.

inlay of black and light coloured woods; the feet have been cut at the bottom, the present balls being recent additions.

An elaborate and very beautiful court cupboard of 1640 is given in fig. 128, and although carved oak at this date was well past its zenith, the interest and care spent by client and craftsman in the conception and execution of this piece, shows that enthusiasm on the subject was not yet quite extinct. The cupboard is in three tiers; the upper, in the form of



FIG. 129.—OAK BUFFET. Height, 3 feet 10 inches; length, 4 feet 1 inch; width, 1 foot 7 inches. Property of SIR THEODORE FRY, Bart.

a canopy with a cornice of large dentals, has a thin top and two pendants, on which are inlaid the initials C. E. The panels are alternately carved with a pomegranate pattern, and inlaid with marqueterie in three coloured woods. The centre panels bear the inlaid date, 'Ye XXV DAYE OF JANUARIE 1640,' and the Cavendish arms on a field or, three stags' heads couped and proper, with the Cavendish crest, a snake nowed. The two lower compartments are on the lines of an ordinary court cupboard.



FIG. 130.—OAK COURT CUPBOARD. Property of SIR CUTHBERT QUILTER, Bart.

The interest centres on the frieze of the middle portion, on which, inlaid in light wood letters with black capitals, are the words 'VNTO VS A CHILDE IS BORNE.' This, no doubt, accounts for the unusual care and elaboration bestowed upon the whole piece. The vase-shaped uprights are much carved and of unusual pattern, but distinctly contemporary with the rest; the panels of this portion have the same alternate arrangement of marqueterie and carving, the pomegranate, the emblem of fertility, being introduced throughout the carving. The lower portion opens in two



FIG. 131.—OAK COURT CUPBOARD.
Height, 5 feet 10 inches; length, 6 feet 3 inches; depth, 1 foot 10 inches. Property of DR. G. H. SAVAGE.

doors, between which runs the Cavendish scrolled bordure found on the Hardwick table (fig. 81). The upper panels of the lower doors repeat the pomegranate design, those below being typical of late Charles I. work, and the rails and stiles are inlaid with a most careful and elaborate checker. This exceptionally fine cupboard was no doubt made to commemorate a birth in the Cavendish family.

The combined buffet and court cupboard, such as Plate X., continued to be made after the middle of the century. Fig. 129 is a dated specimen of the time of Cromwell. The bulbous supports to the cornice are narrow in their necking, and the middle rail is decorated with a shallow diaper. The piece bears the initials T. F., E. F., 1658. It is in perfect condition, and has remained in the owner's family since that date.

Fig. 130 is a later example of court cupboard of the reign of Charles II. The general structure is the same as that of earlier specimens, but the subdivision of these later cupboards generally consists of rows of four or more panels, making them greater in length than height. The top frieze, which bears the date 1672, rests on two turned supports, from which spring small brackets of S form; these supports do not finish in capitals, and their caps somewhat clumsily overlap the canopy. The doors and panels of the upper portion are lightly carved with the patterns that were by this time in their decadence, and the lower portion is divided into two long compartments, each opening in two doors, one of which is missing. The stopped reed mouldings that frame the panels are very indicative of the date. It is probably of northern manufacture, where carved oak furniture continued to be made till well into the eighteenth century.

Fig. 131 is another, still later, dated 1697, in which the frieze preserves characteristics of ornament which had now long since ceased to exist, except on contemporary late oak furniture. The supports to this have almost lost all trace of their original inspiration, and are turned in a series of meaningless rings. The nicking introduced on the outer stiles and upper rails was evidently suggested by the waved ebony mouldings that

had been so much in fashion for twenty years on the foreign tortoise-shell cabinets. The whole front is divided into a series of panels, framed in bolection mouldings of pronounced Carolean type. These court cupboards were to be found in every gentleman's and yeoman's house, varying in quality according to the owner's position, and they continued to be used in conjunction with oak chairs, tables, and forms throughout the seventeenth century, and of plainer shape in country-houses into the eighteenth century. This later type, however, is so well known and so uninteresting that it is unnecessary to carry the evolution any further.

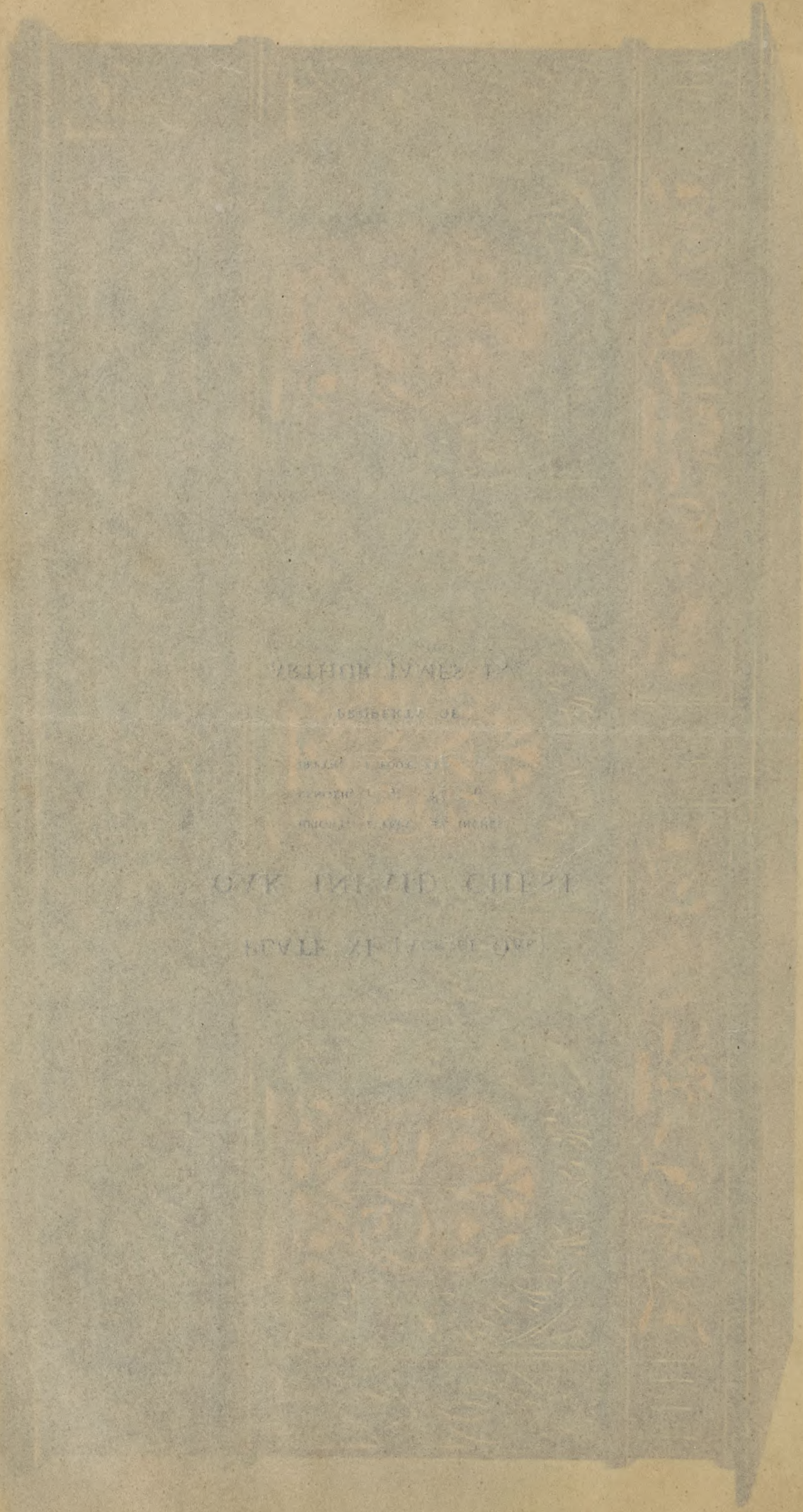
The crown timber of James I., felled in such quantities and sold at so low a price, cheapened the production of what had hitherto been expensive pieces of furniture, and added to the number of chests which at that date still fulfilled the office of holding clothes and linen, and frequently formed part of a marriage dowry; the use of a hanging cupboard forming part of the wainscot being confined to the garde-robes of the large houses. As no specimens of English domestic hanging clothes-cupboards are to be found much before the early part of the seventeenth century, it is safe to assume that the majority of clothes were laid down till about that time. The chests used for this purpose were sometimes divided into two compartments, the lower forming a drawer; and as the number of these increased, the piece was called a 'chest with drawers.' These chest fronts were usually decorated with a classical arcade, containing panels, which in the better specimens were inlaid, the general motive resembling the back of an Elizabethan bed. Inside is frequently found a little hanging box, about four to five inches in width, a survival from Gothic times, and was used by the women for trinkets and ribbons; tallow-candles were often put there as a preventative against moth. In one of the series of engravings of *L'Histoire de Civilisation* of about 1500, a young woman is to be seen in despair, standing by an empty chest; moth-eaten clothes are spread upon the floor, and she is holding a garment in her hands in which the ravages of

moth are apparent, proving that a chest was not altogether a satisfactory receptacle for clothes. Many and varied are the stories connected with chests, but although interwoven in our folklore, these can generally be traced to foreign origin. The 'Contes Amoureux' of France and Italy of the sixteenth century refer to chests as a very usual place of concealment and popular with lovers. Plate XI. is a good example of a chest with a lower drawer, about 1605. The panels on either side of the lock-plate are inlaid with floral arabesques, in self-coloured woods on a light ground; below this the front is divided into three arched compartments between uprights, carved with a design still showing signs of Elizabethan treatment. The arches are supported on squat pilasters, bulbous in outline, but flat in surface; within these are panels inlaid with flower-sprays on a light ground. A reeded plinth separates the front of the chest into two portions, the lower opening as a long drawer, carved with a delicate arabesque and chained patterned strap-work, framed in a lower plinth which is continued round the sides. It is all exceedingly rich in colour and in fine preservation. These chests, like other inlaid furniture, have in three hundred years mellowed to a beautiful combination of browns and yellows; but at the date of their make, when the green stained leaves and murrey coloured flowers of the inlay, shot lustre, and the light oak possessed the charm of cleanliness, they took their right place amidst the surroundings of new panelling and the many coloured cloaks and skirts of brilliant hue that moved amongst them. Now, it is as difficult to estimate what the different tone values of this inlaid furniture must have been, as it is to form any definite idea of the actual sound of the speech and language of those far-away times.

Fig. 132 shows what was once evidently a most brilliant chest of more than ordinary finish and beauty. It is of a pattern found in the previous reign. The frieze, inlaid with floral sprays, is divided by plaques carved in low relief. The front is composed of three arched compartments, divided by carved and projecting acanthus corbels, enclosing



FIG. 132.—OAK CHEST.
Property of the HON. CHARLOTTE MARIA, LADY NORTH, and R. EDEN DICKSON, Esq.



Property of the Hon. Charlotte N. Hilton, East Norton, and R. Lees Dickson, Esq.

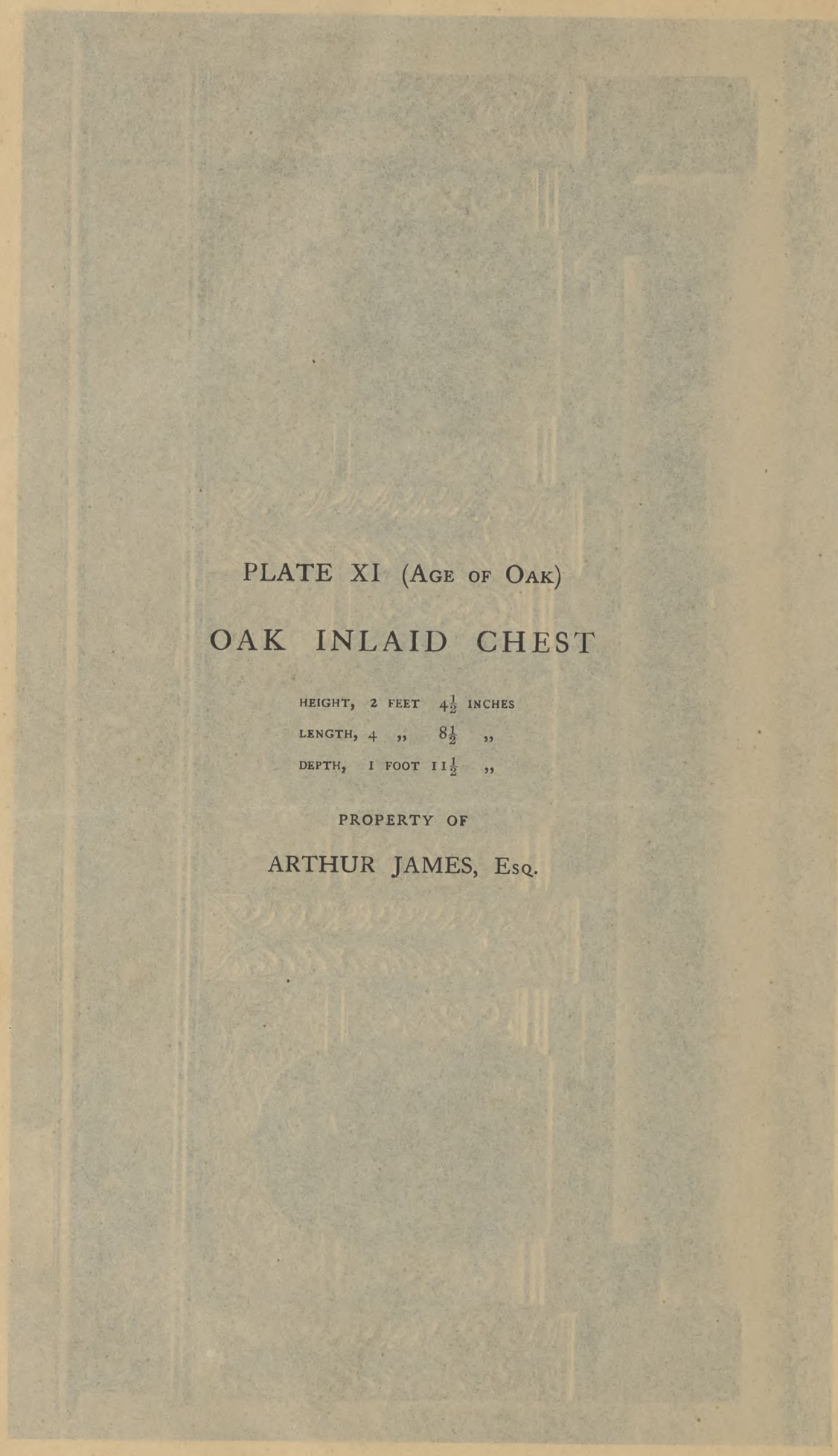


PLATE XI (AGE OF OAK)

OAK INLAID CHEST

HEIGHT, 2 FEET 4½ INCHES
LENGTH, 4 „ 8½ „
DEPTH, 1 FOOT 11½ „

PROPERTY OF

ARTHUR JAMES, ESQ.

FIG. 132.—OAK CHEST.
Property of the Hon. Charlotte Maria, Lady North, and R. Eden Dickson, Esq.





FIG. 133.—Height, 2 feet 7 inches; length, 5 feet 11 inches; depth, 2 feet.

carefully finished marqueterie panels; these stand upon a bottom rail, inlaid with a checker in light and black woods. The legs finish plain, and the keyhole plate is original. The piece is of eastern county work, about 1605.

It is interesting to compare this with the chest (fig. 133) of Devonshire make, which is a few years earlier in date, and preserves the tradition of its style far more accurately; for the decadence of Renaissance design in oak furniture, in the west and north, was slower than in the home counties. A very distinct architectural effort is observable, but the lines of the detail are thin, and the efforts to avoid repetition in the design are over-emphasised, though the frieze carved in alternate cabochon and



FIG. 134.—OAK CHEST. Height, 2 feet; length, 3 feet; depth, 1 foot 6 inches.
Property of SIR GEORGE DONALDSON.

cartouche is simple and effective. The division of the front into four arched panels is uncommon; the inlaid scaling of walnut in conjunction with the ornamentation of the pilasters points to a date even before 1600. This chest was probably designed by one of the architects who at that time were erecting large houses in the western counties, for it corresponds in detail with much of the work found there.

Another good specimen of the beginning of the century is found in fig. 134. This is admirable in workmanship and proportion, and the design of the semi-classical frieze ending in lion-headed bosses, as well as the panel forming a lower drawer, are unusually careful in execution. Between these are two long inlaid panels, the marqueterie design of which is unfortunately invisible in the illustration; the incised lozenge-shaped ornamentation on the lower panels of the sides prove that the date of the piece cannot be before 1605. Fig. 135 is a somewhat elaborate chest of



FIG. 135.—OAK CHEST. Property of A. L. RADFORD, Esq.

about 1625. The construction of the front is curious, the top and bottom rail morticing half-way into the outer stiles; the top frieze is neatly and cleanly carved with a rosaced guilloche. The two panels are carefully inlaid with the usual conventional flower-sprays, in two coloured woods, and contained in arches carved somewhat flatly, with a bold egg and tongue moulding, and spandrels that centre in a well-defined rose. The three upright stiles framing the arches are treated in a vine-branch pattern of early character on a matted ground; but the carving is thin throughout, showing decadence. The lid is a restoration. Fig. 136 is altogether more ordinary in execution of design, and was made about 1630, probably for a yeoman. This specimen was purchased from a well-to-do farmer in South Devon in 1875, and had been a possession of the family for generations. The decoration is composed of deep incised carving, the surface, with the exception of the flower-stalks on the stiles, being left flat. The chain pattern of quatrefoil and flower on a dotted ground forming the frieze is traditional of Elizabethan design, but the whole front is so barbaric in workmanship, and suggestive of a South Sea Islander's efforts in carving, that it can safely be assigned to the inspiration of a village carpenter. In the chest (fig. 137) the lid is edged with a series of shallow dentals, and the front divided by a bold reeded moulding into uprights and horizontal panels, resembling in arrangement the base of a court cupboard. The two upper panels are carved in low relief, with a palmated chain pattern headed by a frieze of simple channel moulding. At the two corners 'Anno Domi' and '1625 W.N.' are lightly incised, and as a heading to the upper panels, the inscription, 'REMEMBER : THE : POOR : WHEN : THOV : OPPENES : THIS : AND : FORGET : NOT :' The four lower panels are decorated in lozenge with small incised circles; the channelling of the stiles and rails bear out the inscribed date; the added fret to the bottom rail is also characteristic of an ornament that began at this time.

The chest of this period, of which the foregoing are very representa-



FIG. 136.—OAK CHEST. Height, 2 feet 6 inches; length, 4 feet 5 inches.



FIG. 137.—OAK CHEST.

Height, 3 feet 2 inches; length, 5 feet; depth, 2 feet. Property of COLONEL THE HON. HENRY MOSTYN.

tive specimens, was now to take a further step in evolution, and it is extraordinary that the inconvenience attendant on searching for an object buried at the bottom of a chest should have been endured for so many years. No doubt one reason was the great expense entailed by having more than one lock, for even as late as 1650 stock-locks on doors were considered so great a luxury, that when families moved from one of their houses to another, these locks were always taken with them.

Of these chests we give two varieties. In fig. 138 the front is divided into three panels, two of which open as doors, framed in four pilasters, on which are applied terminal figures of men, with their hair and



FIG. 138.—OAK CHEST WITH DRAWERS. Height, 3 feet 4 inches; length, 5 feet 3 inches; depth, 1 foot 9 inches. Property of ERNEST CROFTS, Esq.

beards dressed in the manner of the time. Above these, and supported by bunches of fruit, are plain capitals inlaid with the initials J. S. repeated, and the date 1628. The door panels are inlaid with sprays of gillyflowers in vases of deal and black oak, while the marqueterie of the centre panel represents a water-gate with two swans inlaid in light wood. This is framed in a handsome nulling centred and cornered with acanthus, the same spiral nulling, waving in two directions, forming a central division. The lower portion, opening in two drawers, is coarsely carved with roses and a raised lozenge pattern; it is all in excellent preservation, and the irons to the drawers and cupboard doors are original. Fig. 139 is a later specimen



FIG. 139.—OAK CHEST WITH DRAWERS. Height, 2 feet 10 inches; length, 5 feet; depth, 2 feet. Property of LORD FITZHARDINGE.

from Berkeley Castle. In this instance the ordinary arcaded chest form is preserved. The carving is coarse throughout, and the redundancy of decoration is characteristic of Wales, where the chest was undoubtedly manufactured. This profusion of somewhat uninteresting detail with which the Welsh oak furniture of this period is covered is indicative of incapacity and want of originality. In this instance it may be noticed that not only are the sides carved in an exactly similar manner to the front, but also the feet and the plinth moulding, from which the carved bosses are missing. Its date is about 1640. Another interesting form of chest with drawers of about the same time is shown in fig. 140. Here the top opens in one drawer, the front of which is inlaid with a ground of

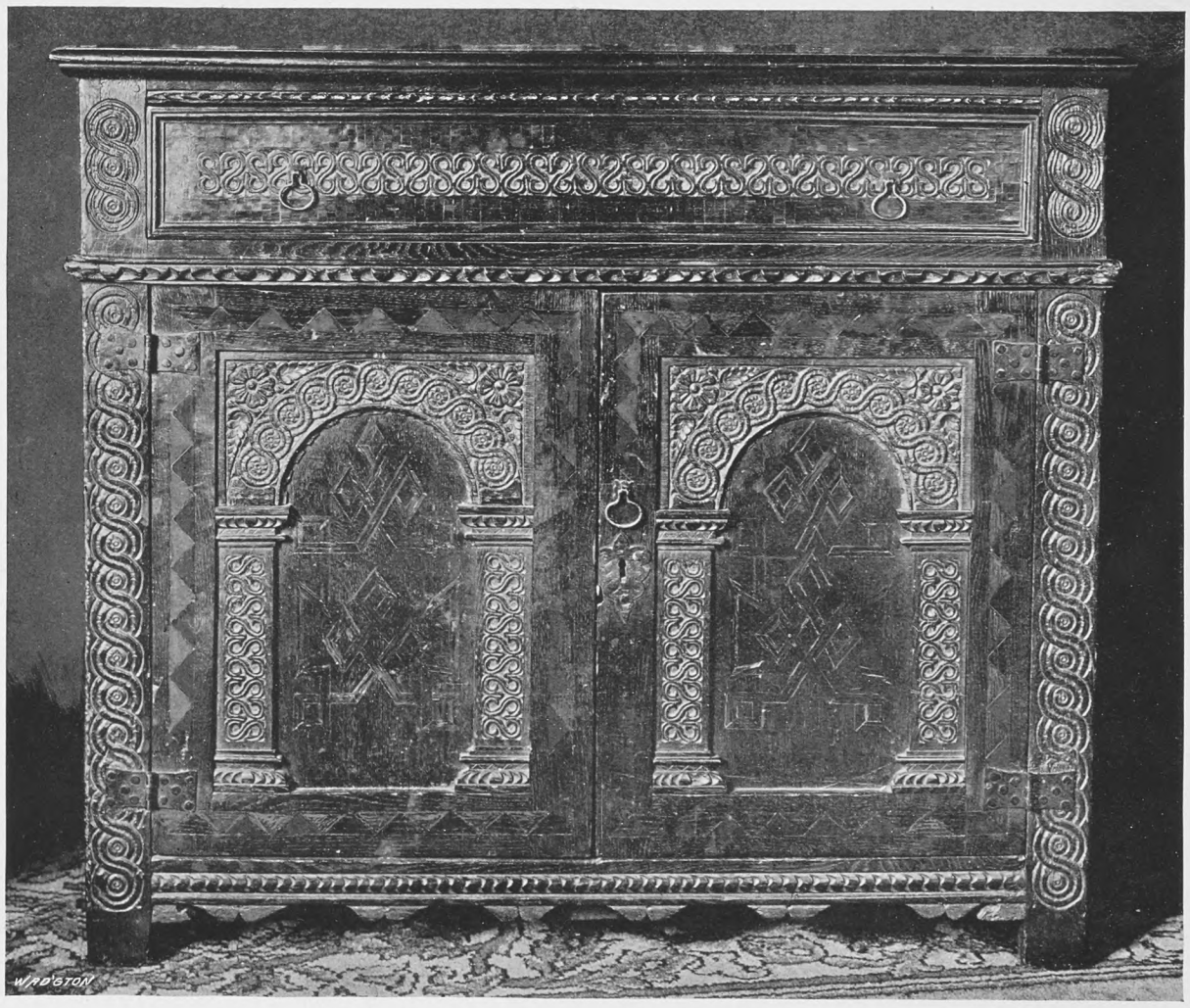


FIG. 140.—OAK CUPBOARD. Height, 3 feet 1 inch; length, 3 feet 7 inches; depth, 2 feet 4 inches. Property of E. A. BARRY, Esq.

checker-work, a band of double S pattern running along the centre. The lower portion opens in two doors, concealing the drawers now missing; the panels are inlaid with a geometrical design, contained within two arches carved with the usual guilloche and roses in the spandrels; they are bordered all round with a triangular checker in black and yellow woods, and the rail at the bottom has the added fret found on oak furniture of this date.

An interesting analogy can be drawn between the relief of the ornament on furniture and plate of this period, and that of the antique wood and metal-work, represented by the art of Byzantium. Forms once solid, round, and full of intention, became aimless, shallow, and scattered, for the tradesmen of both these times sought only to cover the surfaces by ornament with the least possible trouble and thought, and so reverted to an archaic condition of technique entirely devoid of originality, wherein he was content to express himself by dots, circles, and zigzag lines. This is exemplified in fig. 140, and in other specimens of the next decade.

With such an oak chest as fig. 141 a new style of decoration was introduced which lasted in fashion over thirty years. The well-considered proportions and details of this example suggest that it was probably designed by an architect. It is of about the date 1630. The top opens in a long drawer, in the centre of which a curved block of walnut forms a handle, repeated in plain corbels on the sides. The two doors, geometrically panelled, are framed in uprights decorated with applied pendants, bosses, and strap-work of walnut, the centre of the panels being a plaque of ebony, inlaid with a design in bone and mother-of-pearl in the Moorish taste, a form of inlay that became extremely popular here, and no doubt was first inspired by caskets and furniture, that found their way to this country during the negotiations for the Spanish marriage. On opening the doors a series of drawers is disclosed, with their original knob handles. This specimen and the last are early examples of the complete chest with drawers. Fig. 142 is another, rather later in date. The top opens in a

long drawer, the dividing uprights and the centre being inlaid in this same new manner. Below is another very deep drawer, panelled in strong projection, the bevels of which are of so-called zebra or snake-wood.



FIG. 141.—OAK CHEST WITH DRAWERS.
Height, 3 feet 4 inches; length, 3 feet 3 inches. Property of S. E. LETTS, Esq.



FIG. 142.—OAK CHEST WITH DRAWERS.
Height, 4 feet 8 inches ; length, 3 feet 10 inches. Property of S. E. LETTS, Esq.

The lower portion of this chest, opening in two doors over the usual arrangement of drawers, is decorated like the top. This chest is of oak, but in about 1680 it was, probably to match some other furniture, painted black and lacquered in what was then termed 'the Indian taste,' so very fashionable for a time. The bone and pearl inlay is very cleverly imitated in the lacquer-work. The carving of the cornice, the brass ring handles, and the feet are of the date of the painting, but the irons on the inner doors are contemporary with the original chest.



FIG. 143.—COUCH. Height, 3 feet 5 inches; length, 5 feet 8 inches; depth, 1 foot 10 inches. Property of LORD SACKVILLE.

CHAPTER VII

IN early Jacobean upholstered furniture, the design of the visible wood-work is seldom distinctive, and the materials with which it is covered, though of course principally of contemporary material, were often provided from hangings of an earlier time. It is therefore next to impossible to date such pieces within a decade. The furniture represented



FIG. 144.—SETTEE. Height, 3 feet 5 inches; length, 3 feet 8 inches. Property of LORD SACKVILLE.



FIG. 145.—DOUBLE CHAIR. Height, 3 feet 5 inches; length, 3 feet 6 inches; depth, 1 foot 7 inches. Property of LORD SACKVILLE.

in contemporary pictures and engravings are reliable proofs that such forms were in existence at the time, but it does not follow that the artist always selected the fashion of the moment for his accessories. In a great number of Vandyke's portraits, a large piece of black and cloth of gold of the time of Henry VII. is constantly introduced, proving this to be the case. But when embroidery is employed instead of a woven material, and the pattern corresponds exactly with the curves of the furniture, showing without doubt it was worked for the actual piece, it is no little assistance towards ascertaining a correct date. There is a record in the Verney Papers of one of Vandyke's sitters, Lady Sussex, giving much attention to materials for upholstery. She writes and spells as follows :—

'My thinkes to you for my sattine, it cam very will, some of it i employ for the backes of chers, the rest i entende for cortines, when the chinese stofes come in, if you see any prity ons remember me i pray you for to or three peses. . . . I am very sorry i dide not consider of the figerde sattine when i was at Chelsey for truly though the prise be unreasonable i hade rather give it then by any of the figerde sattines that are to be hade hear, thorty shillings the yarde the axe, and the color lokes lyke dort to that i have . . . The carpet truly is a good on. . . . if i can have that and the other for forty ponde or a littell more i would by them, the woulde bee very fine for a bede but onlie if one may have a very good peniworth. For the carpets if the gronde bee very doll and the flowers or workes in them not of very plesent color i doubt the will bee to dole for to suet with my hanginges and chers. . . . Concerning the choice of a small carpet, If it will not sarve for a windo it will sarve for a fote carpet.'

These carpets referred to in the above letter were made in this country for nearly a hundred years; they were of so-called Turkey work, in imitation of Oriental carpets;



FIG. 146.—STOOL. Property of LORD SACKVILLE.



FIG. 147.—FARTHINGALE CHAIR.
Property of LORD SACKVILLE.

the wool being threaded by hand, knotted and cut. There is a great tendency to pre-date much of the furniture made during the reign of Charles I., and assign it to James I. or even to Elizabeth, but oak furniture continued to be made more or less on the old lines until many years after the Restoration.

It is probable that new forms of upholstered furniture were introduced from the French Court of Louis XIII., the brother of Henrietta Maria, and copied by the rich families here. A couch inspired by French taste preserved at Knole (fig. 143) is somewhat before the date of Henrietta Maria's marriage to Charles I. The construction is of beech, and is entirely covered with crimson velvet, or, as it was then termed, incarnadine or cramosie; this is divided by a gold galon into six upright panels, and further trimmed with a crimson and gold fringe, finished at the sides by large-headed gilt nails, and edged with a crimson and gold galon. The ends of the couch let down to any angle by means of a toothed rack, and have small fixed cushions; the arms are straight and square, covered with the velvet, and fringed; the front and sides are upholstered to match, but here the fringes are fixed on with small gilt-headed nails; the seat has been re-covered with modern velvet. It is instructive to find that no more comfortable form of couch has since been invented. Fig. 144 is a settee, somewhat similar in style, but the rounded sides are immovable. The legs and stretchers were originally gilt on a thick jesso preparation,

some of which is visible, although the legs have at a more recent date been painted brown. The back, arms, and sides are of crimson velvet, trimmed as in the last example; the loose cushion, which has been re-made, is of crimson damask, covered with a floral strap-work enclosing ovals, embroidered in silver, and worked in fine silks with allegorical figures. Fig. 145, of the same date, represents another novelty of construction. It is an early form of the double chair, being 3 feet 6 inches long. The woodwork, again birch, originally gilt, is now painted brown. The back, seat, and arms have lost their original covering, and have been re-upholstered at some time in crimson velvet and a richly tasselled fringe of the time of Charles II. These upholstered double seats became even more reduced in size later in the century, and were then termed 'courting chairs' and 'love seats.' Eventually, in the reigns of William and Anne, the backs of the seats became open and resembled two connected chair backs.

Stuffed stools or tabourets accompanied every suite of furniture, and were used according to their height by the younger or less important members of a household in precedence. One of these is shown in fig. 145; it has been re-upholstered at the same time as the double seat. Another tabouret, also at Knole, of higher shape, is fig. 146, which still possesses its original fringe and galon. The chair to match (fig. 147) is of great interest, as although of a well-recognised shape, it is an early example of what was termed a farthingale chair. The farthingale had obscured the female form for nearly eighty years, and about 1612, when the proportions of this dress became outrageous, it was found that a chair without arms was better suited to this extreme style. In consequence of the growth of this eccentric fashion, an edict was issued by the King in 1613 forbidding ladies to come to the masque in 'these monstrous gowns,' owing to the seat-room they occupied. Fig. 148 is an arm and farthingale chair from a large set at Hardwick, many of which are reproductions. Their framework of oak, thinly painted brown, resembles much of the Knole furniture. The velvet has in both these chairs been renewed, and



Height, 3 feet 6 inches; width, 2 feet 6 inches.

FIG. 148.—ARM-CHAIR AND FARTHINGALE CHAIR.
Property of the DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE.

Height, 3 feet 3 inches; width, 1 foot 10 inches.

some old embroidery in fine silks and gold thread reapplied. This embroidery is presumed to have been worked by Mary Stuart and her ladies during her long captivity when under the guardianship of the Earl

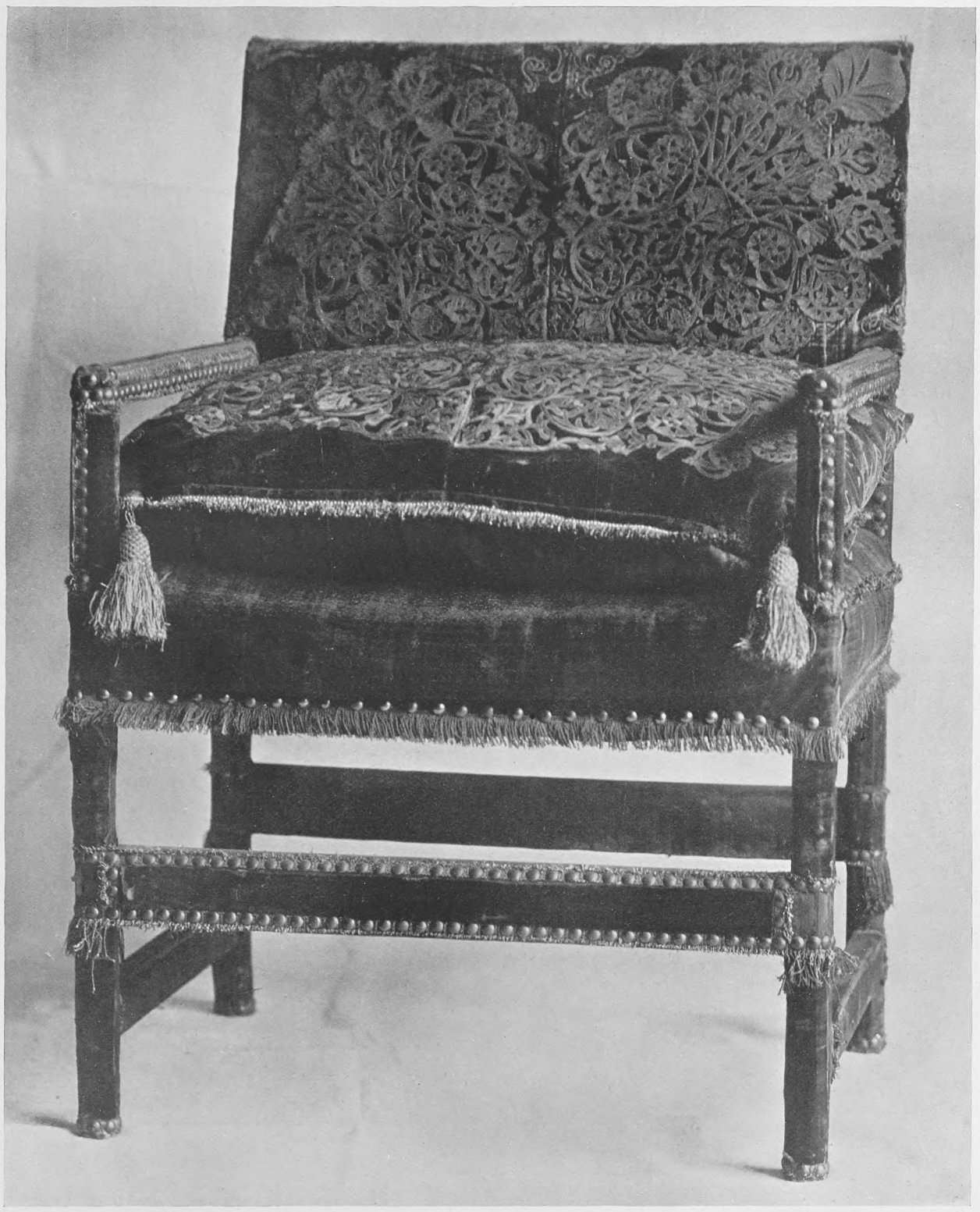


FIG. 149.—UPHOLSTERED CHAIR. Height, 3 feet 4 inches; width, 2 feet 2 inches. Property of LORD SACKVILLE.



FIG. 150.—STOOL. Height, 10 inches; length, 1 foot 10 inches. Property of LORD SACKVILLE.



FIG. 151.—STOOL. Height, 1 foot 8 inches; length, 2 feet; depth, 1 foot 6 inches. Property of LORD SACKVILLE.

of Shrewsbury and Bess of Hardwick. On the back of the arm-chair can be seen what is evidently intended to represent Queen Elizabeth and Leicester driving in state, the royal lion guardant forming part of the carriage. On the front of the seat can be seen the nowed snake of the house of Cavendish. The farthingale chair is very high in the seat and unusually low in the back.

Comfortable chairs made for the wealthy classes, who evidently wished for variety, quickly changed their detail at this time, and it is rare to find any one individual fashion lasting very long. There is a marked difference between the last chair with arms and fig. 149, of about the date 1625. The frame of the latter is entirely and tightly covered with a purple velvet; the back (which has a slight rake), and the loose cushion to the seat, are embroidered on the velvet with a beautiful design in silver thread. The stretcher and all the edges of the chair are bordered by a narrow fringed silver galon, studded with small gilt nails; the tassels hanging from the cushion are of silver thread. It may be noticed here



FIG. 152.—CHAIR. Height, 3 feet 4 inches; width, 2 feet; depth, 1 foot 6 inches. Property of LORD SACKVILLE.

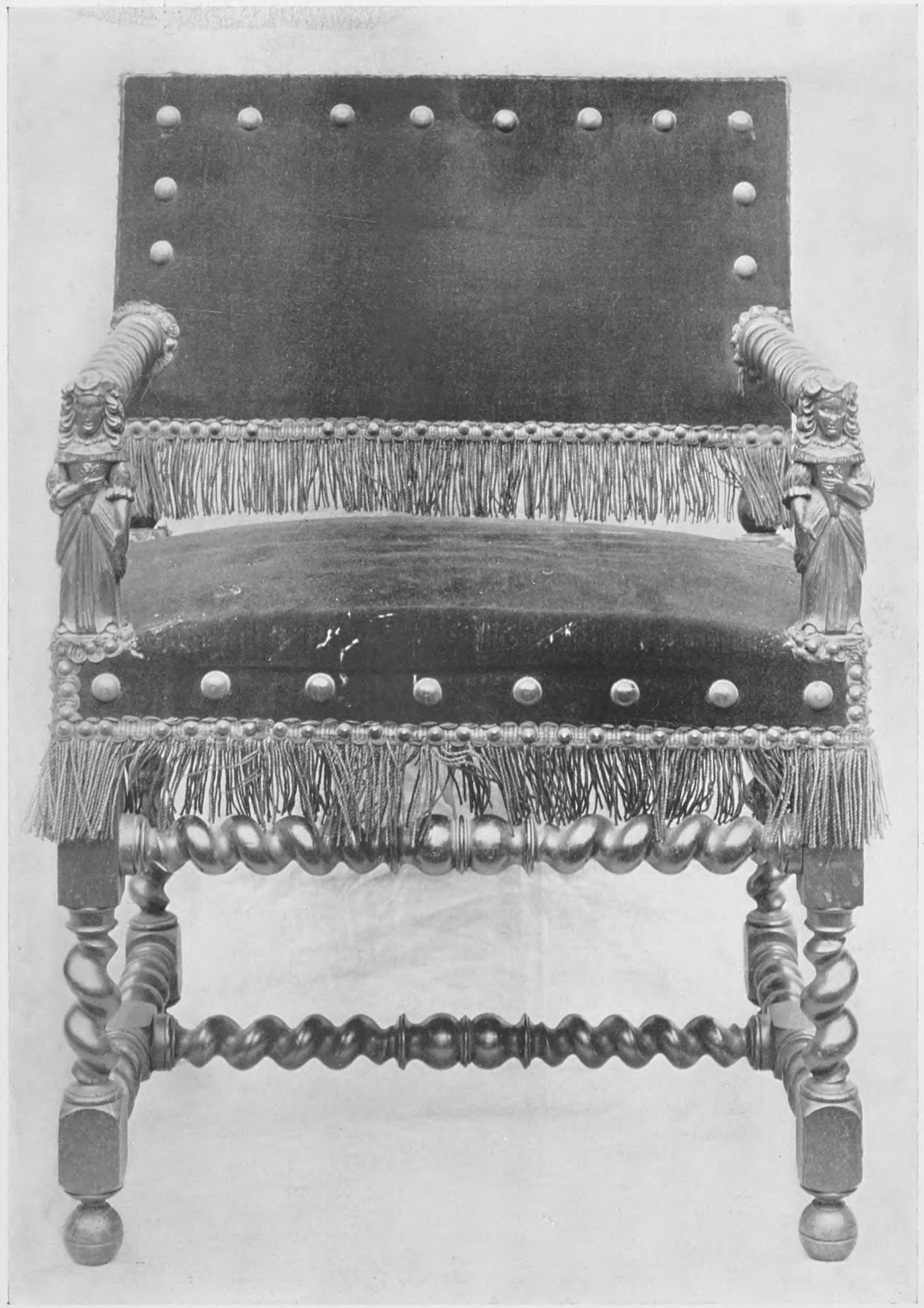


FIG. 153.—WALNUT CHAIR. VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM.



FIG. 154.—NORTHERN FRENCH WALNUT CHAIR.

that the foot-rail in the front of chairs is now being placed higher as a flat stretcher; this develops later into a twist, and later again into open carved work. In the low tabouret (fig. 150) an exactly similar treatment has been pursued, but here the design on the velvet has been worked after it has been joined, and is in its original condition. Fig. 151 is a higher tabouret of X form, much resembling a modern camp-stool. The legs and frame are of beech-wood, and it is upholstered like the preceding specimens; all are trimmed round the feet with a silver-fringed galon. The velvet with which they are covered is still a beautiful colour, resembling the petals of the purple iris. The effect of the ladies in their butterfly coloured dresses seated on this furniture must have been charming in its fantasy.

Another and smaller chair of a set also at Knole is fig. 152, and it is a few years later in date, about 1628. This entire set has been re-covered with late seventeenth-century cherry damask, but underneath this is visible in places the original covering, a damask of the same colour, but smaller in design; the straight fringe is contemporary with the chair. Furniture of this type, though rare in England, is found throughout the engravings of Abraham Bosse, which chiefly represent scenes of domestic life, proving that the design was introduced into this country about the time of Charles I.'s marriage; but such a strong dislike was entertained for this French marriage, and everything connected with that nation, that these new fashions found but little favour except at Court. The interests of this country were also beginning to be absorbed in those party quarrels, that were so soon to take serious form, and block the way to any fresh enterprise in art. In addition to this impending sense of insecurity, another catastrophe had taken place at the commencement of Charles's reign, which for the time paralysed everything. In the year of the coronation the plague destroyed 41,313 of the inhabitants of London—one-sixth of its population. The general depression caused by this event made the new ideas and gaieties introduced by the French followers of the Queen (who at

FIG. 154.—NORTHERN FRENCH WALNUT CHAIR.

FIG. 153.—WALNUT CHAIR. VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM.



FIG. 155.—WALNUT CHAIR. Property of SIR CUTHBERT QUILTER, Bart.

one time numbered 440) extremely unacceptable to the English nation; but on their dismissal by the King, the opportunity of imbibing fresh influence ceased, as these courtiers not only took away with them their own possessions, but all the 'furniture and stuff' belonging to the Queen they could lay their hands on.

Individual taste was, however, largely developed in Charles I., who as a collector of beautiful objects was far in advance of his time, and but for the tasteless destruction and dispersion of his works of art, this royal collection would now be considered, as it was in those days, one of the finest in Europe. The inventory of furniture, hangings, pictures, plate, and jewels, comprising the furnishing of nineteen palaces, took a year to complete, and the entire collection, so wantonly disposed of by Cromwell, three years to sell, the greater portion being purchased by foreigners. This accounts for the practical disappearance of all royal furniture before this date, and the reason why so little is left to represent the personality of our monarchs before the Restoration.



FIG. 156.—OAK CHAIR. VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM.



Fig. 157.—OAK BOX. Property of E. A. Barry, Esq.

The introduction of human form in contemporary costume was not represented on English furniture after the reign of Charles I. In the walnut chair (fig. 153) of about the year 1635, the supports to the arms are formed by ladies dressed in a costume of the time, and holding a rose. The dress is cut low, with lace falling on the shoulders; the arms are bare to the elbows; the hair is loose; the disappearance of the farthingale, and the introduction of panniers over a close skirt, clearly mark the change taking place in woman's dress since the beginning of the century. The arms, legs, and stretchers of the chair are composed of an elegant twist which at this time commenced to be used. The upholstery is modern. The chair is foreign in inspiration, but entirely English in execution. A northern



(4) OAK INLAID BOX

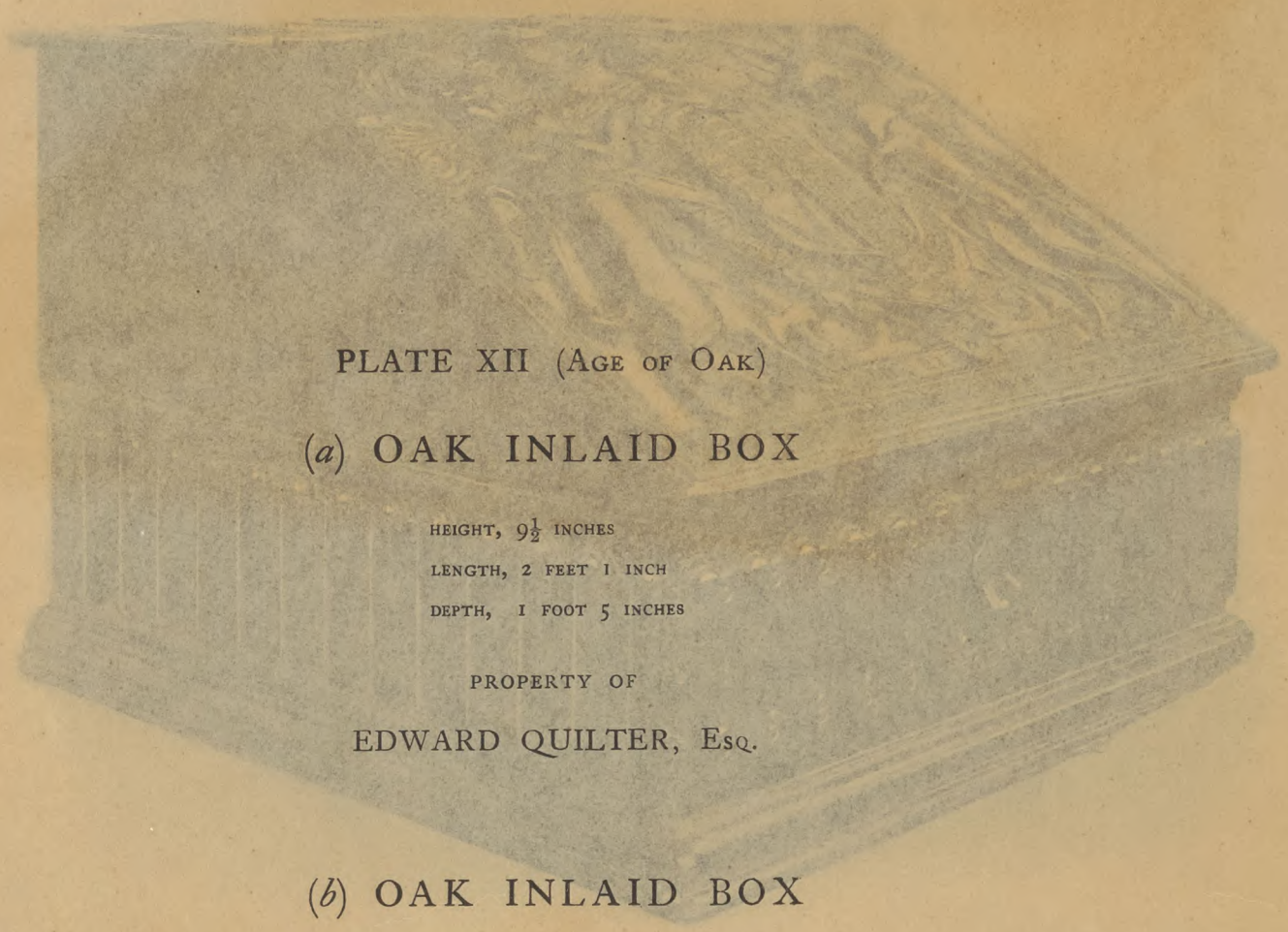


PLATE XII (AGE OF OAK)

(*a*) OAK INLAID BOX

HEIGHT, 9½ INCHES
LENGTH, 2 FEET 1 INCH
DEPTH, 1 FOOT 5 INCHES

PROPERTY OF

EDWARD QUILTER, ESQ.

(*b*) OAK INLAID BOX

HEIGHT, 2 FEET 7 INCHES
LENGTH, 2 „ 9 „
DEPTH, 1 FOOT 9 „

PROPERTY OF

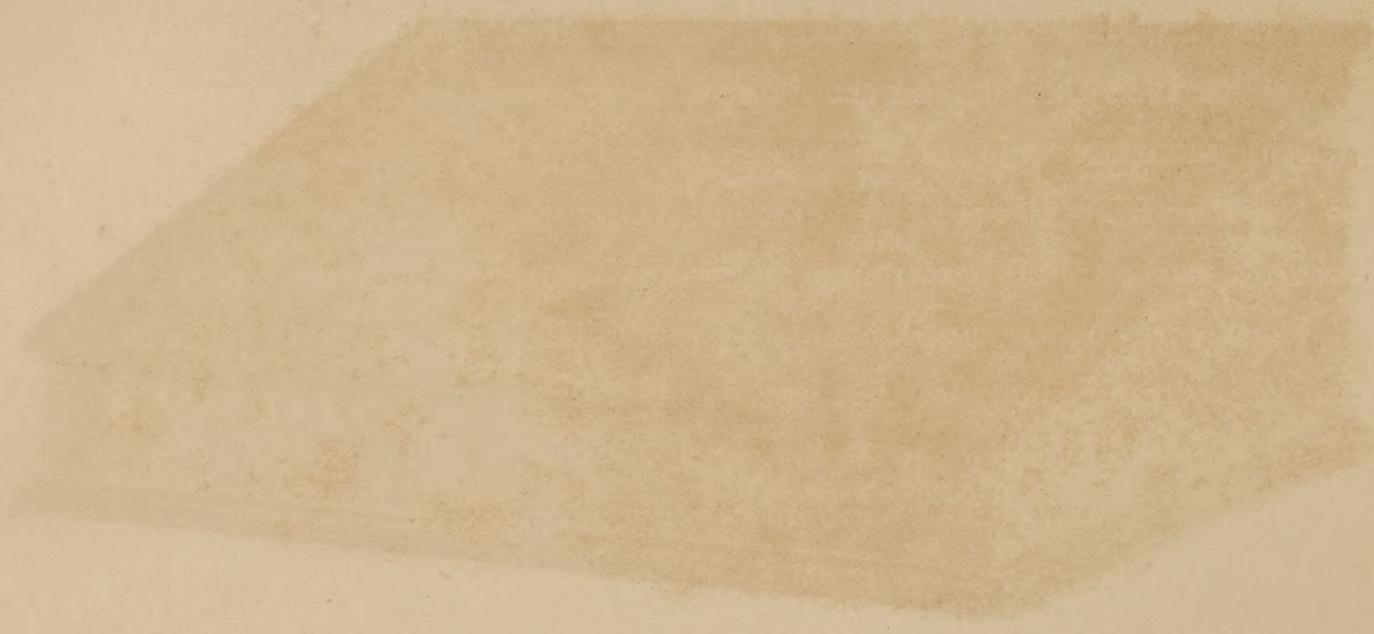
EDWARD QUILTER, ESQ.







Shirley Slocombe.



French chair is given in fig. 154 to show how closely we copied their forms, though the double stretcher was hardly ever introduced on English examples. In both instances the women wear a single row of large pearls, the fashionable ornament of the time.

The twist in the legs of furniture beginning at this period was of slow growth, oak not adapting itself to this cutting. Fig. 155 is one of a set of chairs made in walnut with twisted legs, the arms being plain, covered with pigskin, like the back and seat. The low wide form is copied from the foreign type. Fig. 156 shows a later chair, less wide in the seat, more compact, and without arms; it is of oak, and the consequent angularity and coarseness of the twist is apparent. The original Turkey



FIG. 158.—OAK BOX. Property of H. A. TIPPING, Esq.

work covering is dated 1649 in the needlework on the back. This Turkey work was a favourite covering for furniture, and matched the carpets and curtains, but its destruction by moth has left but few examples.

Boxes, such as Plate XII., were much used in Elizabethan and Jacobean times for documents, daily accounts, and other papers. When found of a rather later date and with a flat lid, they were termed Bible or lace boxes, and used for these purposes. The box (*a*) is of oak, and the top, of desk form, is inlaid with a parquet design of sycamore wood; the front is decorated



FIG. 159.—OAK LIVERY CUPBOARD. Property of C. E. KEMPE, Esq.

with a little arabesque strap-work, and the sides are inlaid with the bead and spindle, or husk design so popular at this time. Another oak box (*b*), on the same plate, is some fifteen years later in date. This is in two compartments; the upper portion, opening as a lid, is decorated round the face and sides with a delicately carved cornice of classical design, supported at the corners with scrolled walnut corbels of acanthus. The lower portion, forming a drawer, is decorated in a similar manner; the front panels are inlaid with a floral design in coloured woods on a cedar ground;



FIG. 160.—OAK LIVERY CUPBOARD. Height, 1 foot 6 inches; width, 1 foot 2 inches.
Property of A. L. RADFORD, Esq.



FIG. 161.—OAK LIVERY CUPBOARD. Property of A. L. RADFORD, Esq.

the lock-panel bears the letters S. G. G. The base is carved with a bold half-circle and tongue moulding, showing that this very highly finished piece of furniture was originally designed to be placed on a stand. Fig. 157 is of oak, also of desk form, of about the date 1610. The royal arms of James I. are carved on the lid, and on the sides are incised the emblems of Great Britain. The lower portion is decorated with a bold nulling in high relief, finishing in a nicely moulded base. The lock-plates and hasp are original. Fig. 158 is another oak specimen of rougher make; in this instance the top is plain. The bottom opens as a drawer; the front and sides are carved with a double band of

strap-work in low relief, the scrolling of which is ingeniously varied, and relieved here and there by the introduction of the classical honeysuckle.

Other small pieces of furniture were little hanging or livery-cupboards. The daily distribution of liveries to the gentleman attendants and pages, as well as to the servants in a great house, was an important function. Fig. 159 is about the date 1635. The frame is inlaid with a charming checker of light and dark coloured woods; the door is carved with a well-known pattern of the time, and the row of balusters for the purpose of ventilation are of good design. These cupboards are generally divided by one or more shelves, the bread and small food being kept in the ventilated portion. Fig. 160 is a less elaborate example, a few years later in date, in which both compartments are ventilated by rows of straight balusters; the marqueterie that decorates the framing of the door is coarse, and surmounted by a flat and dental cornice. Fig. 161 is after the Restoration, and rough in construction, evidently intended for use in a farmhouse. These little cupboards are somewhat scarce, as owing to their open fronts they were considered useless and were broken up. They fulfilled the same purpose as the wheel pattern bread cupboard, found so plentifully throughout Brittany.

A distribution of livery in early times is described as follows in a Life of Wolsey, on the occasion of the Cardinal's visit to Charles v. at Bruges :—

> 'Also the Emperor's officers every night went through the town from house to house where as any Englishman lay or resorted, and there served liveries for all night, which was done after this manner. First, the Emperor's officers brought into the house a cast of fine manchet bread, two great silver pots, with wine and a pound of fine sugar, white lights and yellow, a bowl or goblet of silver to drink in, and every night a staff torch. This was the order of their liveries every night.'

This distribution would have been much the same in England, and would have been carried on in the great houses on similar lines till the Rebellion.

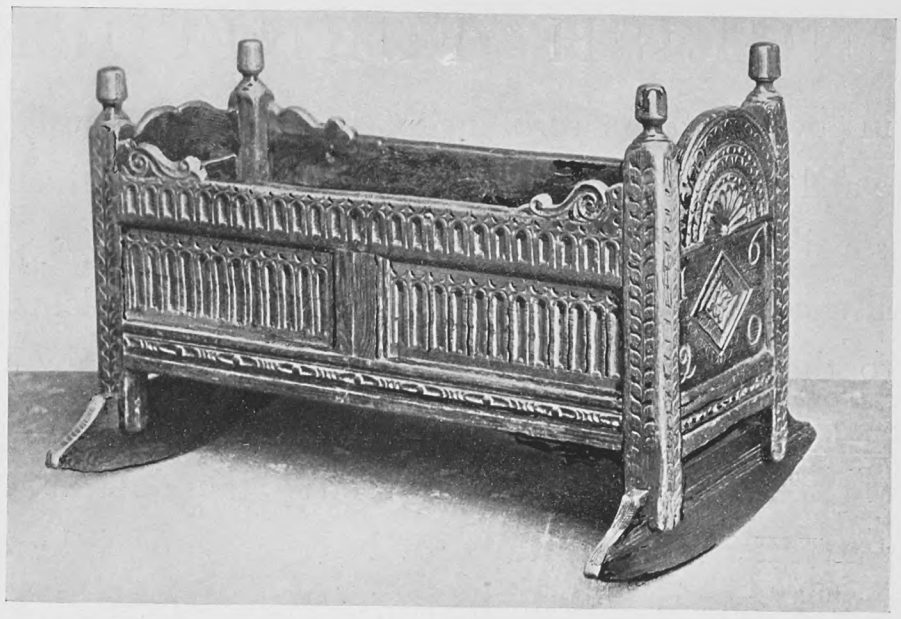


FIG. 162.—OAK CRADLE.

CHAPTER VIII

THE sharp spell of domestic misery and trouble that swept over England between the years 1643 and 1653 is happily unparalleled in our history; for during the civil wars of the fifteenth century the classes actively involved were divided into two large sections, both more or less accustomed to warfare. But at the time of the Rebellion the prosperity of the country had created a large and influential body of peaceable country gentlemen and merchant citizens, who found themselves forced to take part in the quarrel between the King and Parliament. As the struggle proceeded every form of trade was paralysed, every form of art neglected, its patrons being either actively engaged in the war, or taking refuge from the storm abroad. It is therefore not surprising to find that the furniture of this time is lacking in interest, showing advancement neither in construction nor decoration.

Society, as we understand the term, after the battle of Marston Moor, ceased to exist for the time being, and as the creation of better-class furniture has always been dependent upon entertainments and social gatherings, the dearth of this impetus accounts for a stagnation in its

manufacture, and also for the somewhat dull and uninteresting appearance of the small quantity that was made, the public taste being entirely influenced by Cromwell and his followers, who had usurped the government. In addition to the absence of active taste, the desertion of the fine houses, and the wanton destruction of furniture and works of art by the troops of both parties quartered upon private individuals, greatly diminished the number of the more delicate pieces, and practically destroyed all the existing upholstered furniture. In some instances this destruction was wholesale. In a number of the *Mercurius Rusticus* of 1643, there is a graphic description of the besieging of Wardour Castle in that year by Sir Edward Hungerford, then chief commander of the rebels in Wiltshire. After a siege of three days, Lady Arundell, who was in sole charge, surrendered on the



FIG. 163.—OAK CRADLE. Length, 3 feet 1 inch; height, 2 feet 1 inch; depth, 1 foot 4 inches. Property of SIR THEODORE FRY, Bart.

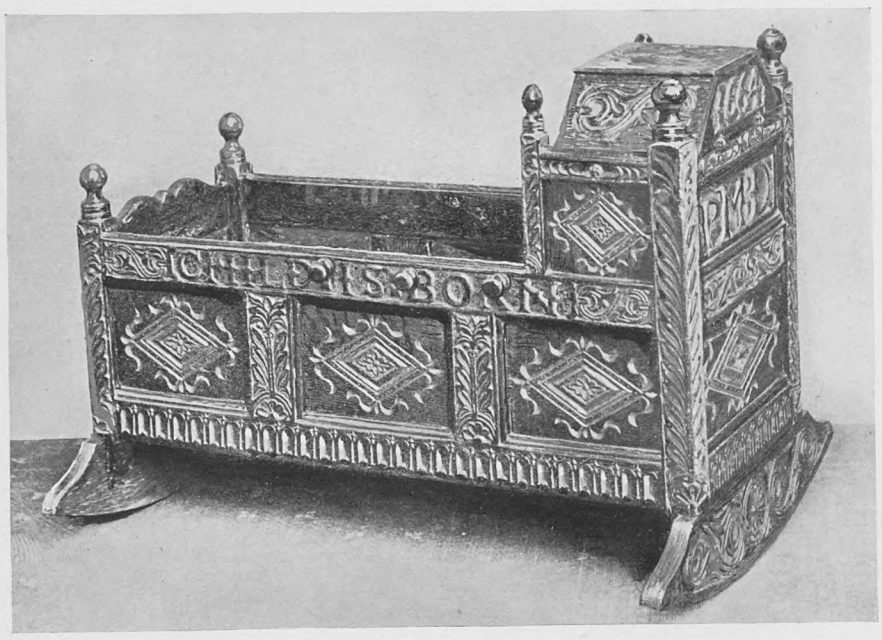


FIG. 164.—OAK CRADLE.



FIG. 165.—OAK CRADLE. Length, 3 feet 1 inch. Property of the EARL OF CARRINGTON.

understanding that she and all others in the castle should have quarter, that all furniture and goods in the house should be safe from plunder, and that the ladies and servants should carry away all their wearing-apparel. The extract goes on to say :—

''Tis true they observed the first article and spared the lives of all the besieged ; but for the other two, they observed them not in any part. As soon as they entered the castle, they first seized upon the several trunks and packs which they of the castle were making up, and left neither the ladies nor servants any other wearing clothes but what was on their backs. There was in the castle one extraordinary chimney-piece, valued at two thousand pounds ; this they utterly defaced, and beat down all the carved works thereof with their pole-axes. There were likewise rare pictures ; these in a wild fury they break and tear to pieces. In triumph they bring five cart loads of their richest hangings and other furniture towards Dorchester, and since that, contrary to their promise, they plundered the whole castle, so little use was there of the inventory, unless to let the world know what Lord Arundell lost, and what the Rebels gained. This havoc they made within the castle. Without they burnt all the out-houses, they pulled up the pales of two parks, they burn three tenements and two lodges, they cut down all the trees about the house and grounds. Oaks and elms, such as but few places could boast of the like, these they sold for four-pence, sixpence, or twelve-pence a-piece, that were worth three, four, or five pounds a-piece.'



FIG. 166.—OAK CRADLE. Length, 2 feet 11 inches ; height, 1 foot 3 inches.



CHILDREN'S OAK CHAIRS.

FIG. 167.—Height, 3 feet 1 inch; height to seat, 2 feet; width of seat, 11 inches.

FIG. 168.—Height, 3 feet 11 inches; height to seat, 2 feet 5 inches; width of seat, 1 foot.

Property of MORGAN WILLIAMS, Esq.

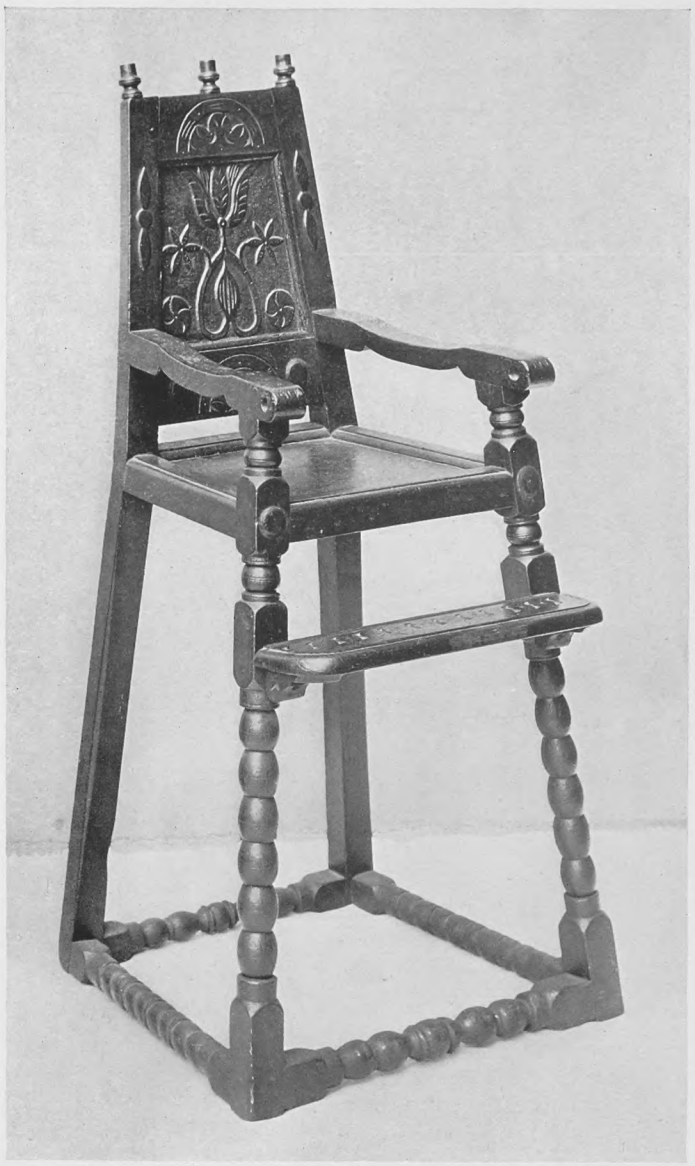


FIG. 169.—CHILD'S OAK CHAIR.
VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM.

And in the Verney Papers we read that, after four years' absence, Mary Verney revisits Claydon, and finds

'The house most lamentably furnished, all the linnen is quite worne out, the fire-irons and other odd things are so extreamly eaten with Rust thatt they cannot be evor of any use againe—the cloath of the musk colored stools is spoyled and the dining room chairs in Ragges — to-morrow I intend to goe and I shall leave ye house soe full of soldiers, thatt I feare they will make us very poore as beggers. I protest I know nott which way we shall live if the countrey may all wayes quarter soldiers.'

In many instances the furniture was used as firewood. Its commercial value at this time is shown in another letter from Sir John Leeke to Sir Edward Verney at an early period of the war:—

'I protest I am most miserable, for though I have friends yet noe friend to lend me tenn pounds, no man will part with a penny of money, monies are not to be had for anything unless arms, swords, and muskets, which are gold and silver, plate and household stuff are not merchauntable.'

In spite of this lamentable state of affairs, by which society was shaken to its foundations, the unprotected state of women compelled even those who had lost their husbands in the war to a speedy re-marriage, and consequently the cradles and baby chairs that passed through this period have a particular interest attached to them.

Oak cradles much resemble each other, save in the variety of carving, and being of extremely strong construction, they did service for several generations of babies. Fig. 162 is an early specimen of this period with

a deep channelling, sunk on the top rail and side panels; the posts terminate in knobbed finials; the back is headed by a carved lunette, underneath which is the date 1620. The carved spandrels give a charm to the usually rather ugly angle in cradles, where the sides are tenoned to the uprights; the rockers are original, and show signs of much foot-wear. Fig. 163 is of the succeeding reign, and is of rougher workmanship; here the finials, six in number, are shaped as acorns. The upper panel bears the date and initials, 16 M. B. 35, in an escalloped border; the heading and corner panel are coarsely carved with masks, the design on the side panels is most unusual—suggesting Flemish influence. Fig. 164 was evidently made for the first of a family, as the words 'Unto us a child is born' are carved on the upper rail, which has the original yew pegs on which the bedding was slung; the head is surmounted by a hood, the side panels being carved in lozenge; the back bears the date 1664, with the initials B. M. D. The rockers are carved and show signs of foot-wear. These three cradles are of Yorkshire origin. Fig. 165 is also hooded, and the panels are inlaid with sprays of tulips in two-coloured woods; the uprights and rails are inlaid with a large checker; the edges have been re-



FIG. 170.—CHILD'S OAK CHAIR.
Height, 3 feet 10 inches; width of seat, 1 foot 1 inch.
Property of H. MARTIN GIBBS, Esq.

paired, and the rockers are restorations. A later and rougher type made for a child of humble origin, and bearing the date 1691, is given in fig. 166; in this instance the two ends are left open, and the rockers finish at the top in a rude trefoil; the headings to the posts are turned in baluster fashion. These cradles were sometimes upholstered in material. There is a specimen at Badminton, made early in the seventeenth century, shaped in the manner of fig. 165, covered close throughout in crimson velvet, and studded with gilt nails.

In early times congratulatory visits on the birth of a child were important functions in society, the 'lying-in chamber' being especially decorated for the occasion, and the cradle covered with an elaborately worked quilt. Engravings of the seventeenth century show the entertainment and refreshment of the guests proceeding in the room, with the mother and child in bed. A pincushion of an elaborate pattern, with 'God bless the babe' in pins, was a favourite form of gift on these occasions, and we read that in 1665, 'one of the ladies of the Verney family, though partially insane, takes pleasure in the adornment of her baby's "peencushion."' In the same letter mention is made of a fine white mantle to lay over the head of the cradle, with a smaller one to match, to form a quilt. In the next year, that of the great fire, much difficulty was found by a member of the same family in obtaining a cradle in London, 'such things being very deare now, as all their stores are burnt.'

Other interesting pieces of furniture connected with children of the seventeenth century are their chairs. The first of these (fig. 167) is of about the date 1635. The back is low, the panel and seat-rail lightly carved, and surrounded by a low scrolled cresting; the arms roll over at their extremities, which are pierced to hold a bar; the supports to these arms are early in type, finishing in straight legs; the foot-rest is missing. Fig. 168 is a taller chair, about fifteen years later; the height of the cresting, the applied half-baluster ornament now coming into fashion that

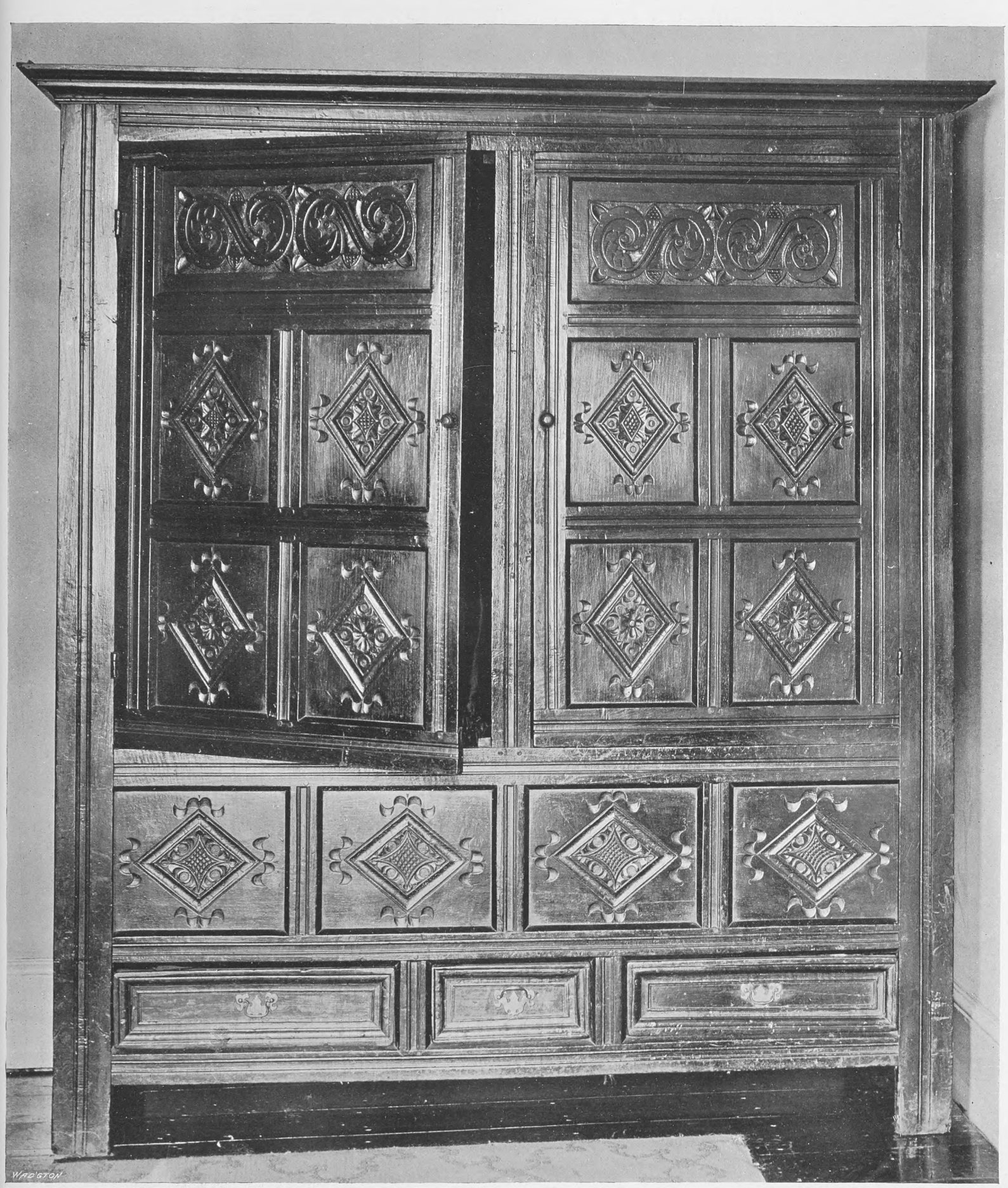
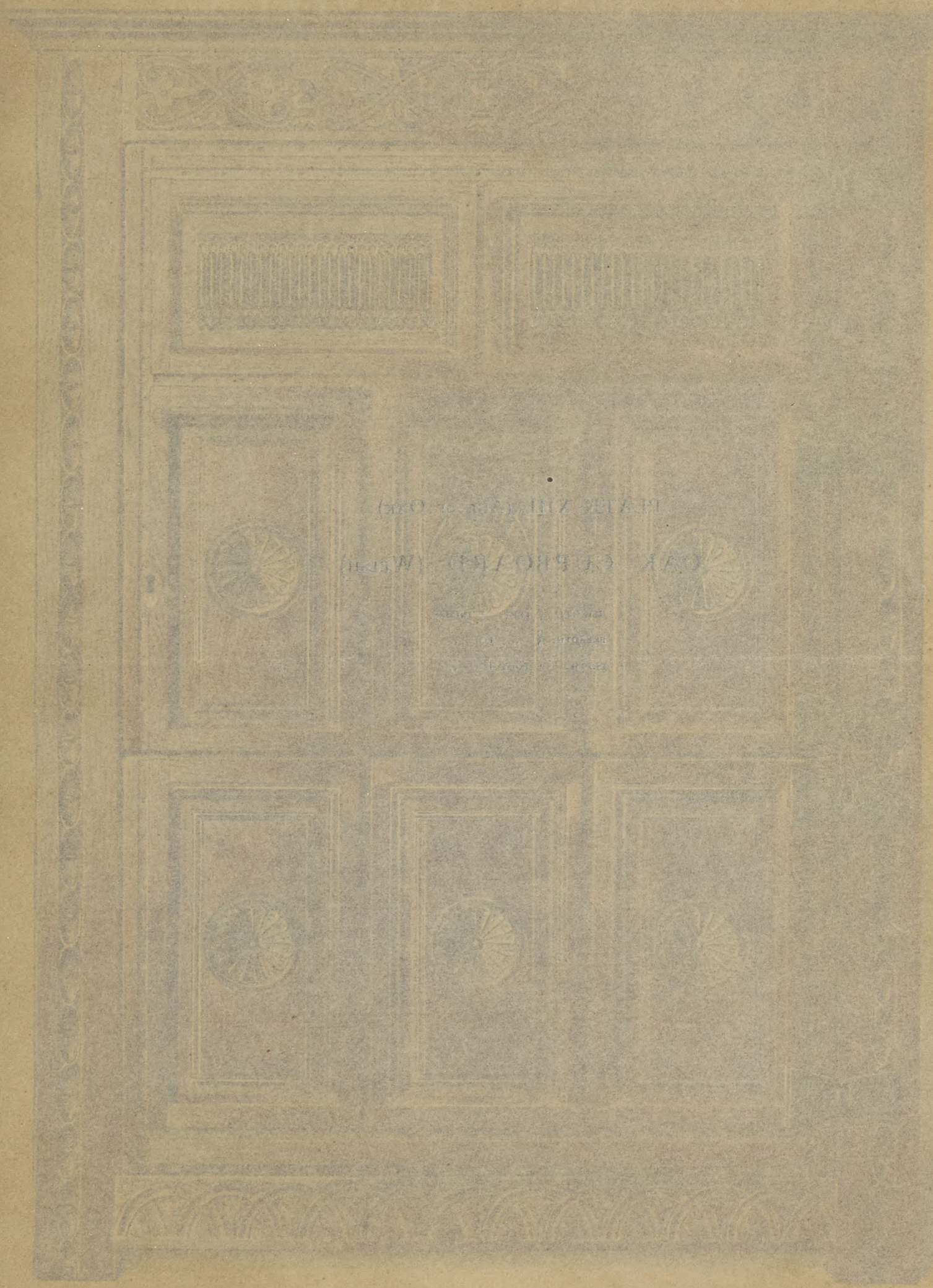


FIG. 171.—OAK HANGING WARDROBE. Height, 6 feet 8 inches; width, 5 feet 7 inches; depth, 1 foot 1 inch. Property of PERCY MACQUOID, Esq.

rises above the arms, the plain panel with bolection moulding, and the simplicity of the arm supports and legs, point to the date 1650. The holes in the arms for the bar, and those for the foot-rest, have been pegged up. Fig. 169 is some years after the Restoration, the knobbed legs and stretchers, the flat carving of the back, and the sunken seat panel corresponding with the other chairs of the time; the foot-rest is not original. Fig. 170 is an example in which the back panel and frame are inlaid with marqueterie. The legs in this instance are parallel, the foot-rest being



FIG. 172.—OAK HANGING WARDROBE. Height, 5 feet 11 inches; length, 5 feet 3 inches; depth, 1 foot 8 inches. Property of H. MARTIN GIBBS, Esq.



rises above the arms, the plain panel with bolection moulding, and the simplicity of the arm supports and legs, point to the date 1650. The holes in the arms for the bar, and those for the foot-rest, have been pegged up. Fig. 169 is some years after the Restoration, the knobbed legs and stretchers, the flat carving of the back, and the sunken seat panel corresponding with the other chairs of the time; the foot-rest is not original. Fig. 170 is an example in which the back panel and frame are inlaid with marqueterie. The legs in this instance are parallel, the foot-rest being

PLATE XIII (AGE OF OAK)

OAK CUPBOARD (WELSH)

HEIGHT, 5 FEET 2 INCHES
BREADTH, 3 „ 10 „
DEPTH, 1 FOOT 10½ „

FIG. 172.—OAK HANGING WARDROBE. Height, 5 feet 11 inches; length, 5 feet 3 inches; depth, 1 foot 8 inches. Property of H. MARTIN GIBBS, Esq.



Shirley Slocombe delt

supported by those in projection; the cresting and ears are large in proportion to the chair, and, in conjunction with the elaborately turned half-baluster applied ornaments, conform to a date approximating 1670.

Movable hanging cupboards or wardrobes were introduced as part of the furniture of a bedroom early in the seventeenth century. Previous to this time they would have formed part of the panelling or been of simple structure, opening in a single door and containing shelves, the elaborate linenfold cupboards seen in drawings being either for ecclesiastical or royal purposes. Plate XIII. is a good example of a Welsh cupboard with shelves, and dated 1618. The front originally opened as one door. The panels are framed in a bolection moulding on the inner side, the outer and lower mouldings being plainly bevelled; the centre panel is further decorated with two grotesque profiles. The frieze-rail and two upper panels are carved in the style of 1615; the introduction of carving on the uprights and lower rail is characteristic of Welsh oak furniture.

Fig. 171 is a distinct hanging wardrobe, of about the date 1650. This opens in two doors, which extend rather more than half-way down the piece; the remaining portion is a fixture and opens in three narrow drawers framed in a late Jacobean moulding, with later handles. The doors are headed by two oblong panels of shallow scrolled carving, the remainder of the panels being deeply cut in lozenge, giving a particularly quiet and decorative effect; the rails and stiles are cleanly worked with a broad channel moulding. The doors have their original button handles of yew, and within are the original wooden pegs on which the clothes were hung. It is of great weight, being of oak throughout, and constructed in one piece. A smaller wardrobe of this same description, though later in date, is fig. 172. Here the panels are consequently larger, being but two to each door, yet, after a lapse of twenty years, decorated with the same lozenge pattern; and this pattern is so frequently found upon this class of cupboard devoted to the use of woman, that one can only presume it bore an heraldic significance. The frieze is flatly carved

with a sunflower pattern in lunette, and the rails of the doors are ornamented with a similar quality of work. In the western counties these wardrobes are frequently found with the carved friezes picked out in colours; two decorated in this manner in red and blue are in existence at Clevedon Court. Another of these interesting, though rather cumbersome, hanging cupboards is fig. 173, of about the date 1670. Here the cornice is supported by corbels, with the frieze beneath decorated in two raised and deeply bevelled panels, forming a drawer, on which the centre ornament is hollowed out as a clutch handle. The front opens in two doors, panelled with Carolean arches framed between pilasters with fluted bases, the lower portion being fixed and decorated with the panels similar to those on chests with drawers of this time. A little waved border finishes the panels;

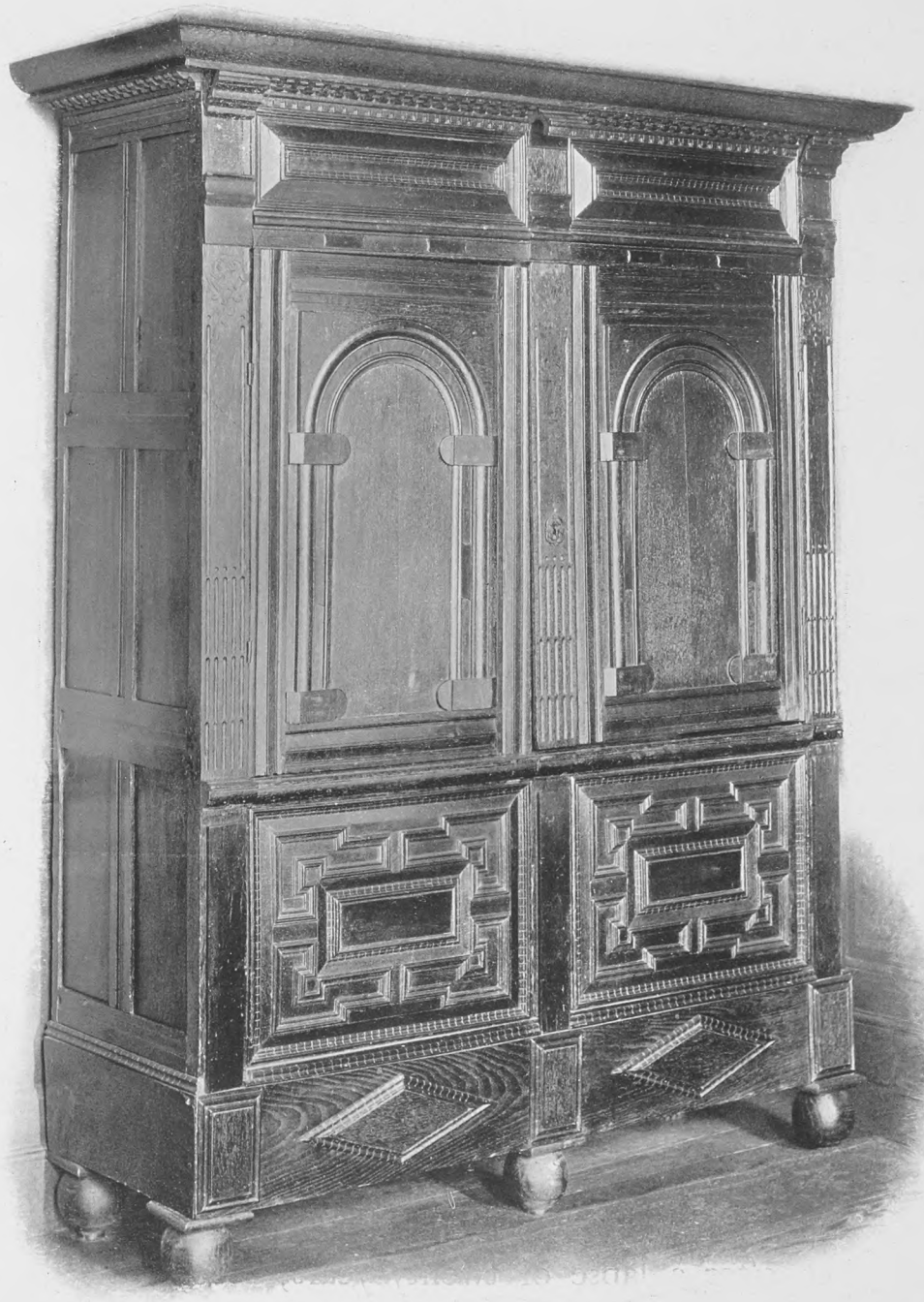


FIG. 173.—OAK HANGING WARDROBE.
Height, 7 feet 5 inches; width, 5 feet 11 inches; depth, 1 foot 11 inches.
Property of the HON. CHARLOTTE MARIA LADY NORTH and R. EDEN DICKSON, Esq.



FIG. 174.—OAK TABLE. Length, 7 feet 6 inches; height, 2 feet 7 inches; width, 2 feet 6 inches. Property of MORGAN WILLIAMS, Esq.



FIG. 175.—OAK TABLE. Length, 12 feet; height, 2 feet 11 inches; width, 3 feet.
Property of FRANK GREEN, Esq.

the plinth has the same ornament in lozenge, and stands on ball feet, which are restorations.

The large oak joined tables of the preceding reigns continued to be made throughout the seventeenth century, and though certain modifications in structure and detail took place, and the drawer-top gradually disappeared, the original form lasted for considerably over a hundred years. In fig. 174 the top is single, and the frame is without ornament, save for a deep channel moulding that also runs round the foot-rail. The legs are chamfered, a feature at this date which somewhat detracts from their dignity. Underneath this table six stools are fitted, and supported by a centre stretcher, and a groove sunk in the foot-rail to receive their edges. The stools are more elegant in form than usually found at this period, and together with the table are in an admirable state of preservation; they are of South Wales manufacture, of about the date 1640. Other tables of this character were fitted with forms as in fig. 175. Here the frame is carved with a bold, straight nulling, centred with the initials W. G., and the date 1686. The legs, six in number, are of large bulbous form,

finishing at the feet in plinths, and the foot-rail that receives the forms is deeply channelled on the outer side; the design of the legs was evidently taken from a far earlier specimen, as this large round bulbous form had at the date of this table long ceased to be made; the nulling throughout, however, is exactly contemporary with the table. Forms and stools were the recognised side seats, but the top and bottom of these tables were furnished with chairs. Sometimes the frames of the forms were carved to resemble the tables. Fig. 176 is a well-preserved and perfect specimen of an ornamental bench of about 1635.

It is unnecessary to illustrate all the later developments of these long oak tables, and two more only are given to show the disappearance of the bulbous leg and its evolution to baluster form, as in fig. 177, which bears the late date of 1697, though the strap-work carving is of much earlier design; and fig. 178 of the same date (accompanied by its form), in which the baluster is high-shouldered and connected to the frame by brackets. After this date the legs became straight, and continued so, well into the eighteenth century. This form of table was also much used in Jacobean times for altars. When made for this purpose, they invariably had the front and sides of the frame carved and the back left plain. The small long-shaped tables were merely reproductions of those of larger size; it is therefore unnecessary to illustrate them, but few were made, and it was not until the introduction of coffee, chocolate, and tea, that the demand for small tables increased. Coffee, as a curiosity, was introduced here in 1615, but not as a drink until 1645, and became sufficiently popular in 1652 to justify a Greek

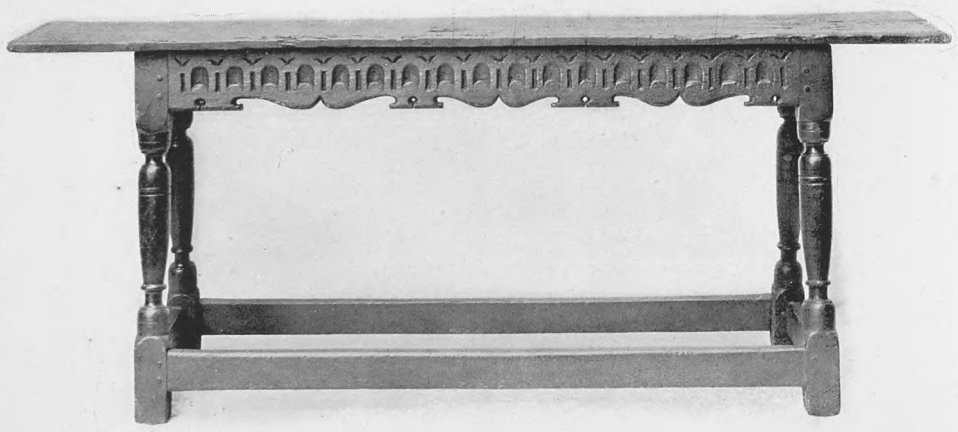


FIG. 176.—OAK BENCH. Property of ERNEST CROFTS, Esq.



FIG. 177.—OAK TABLE. Property of the DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE.

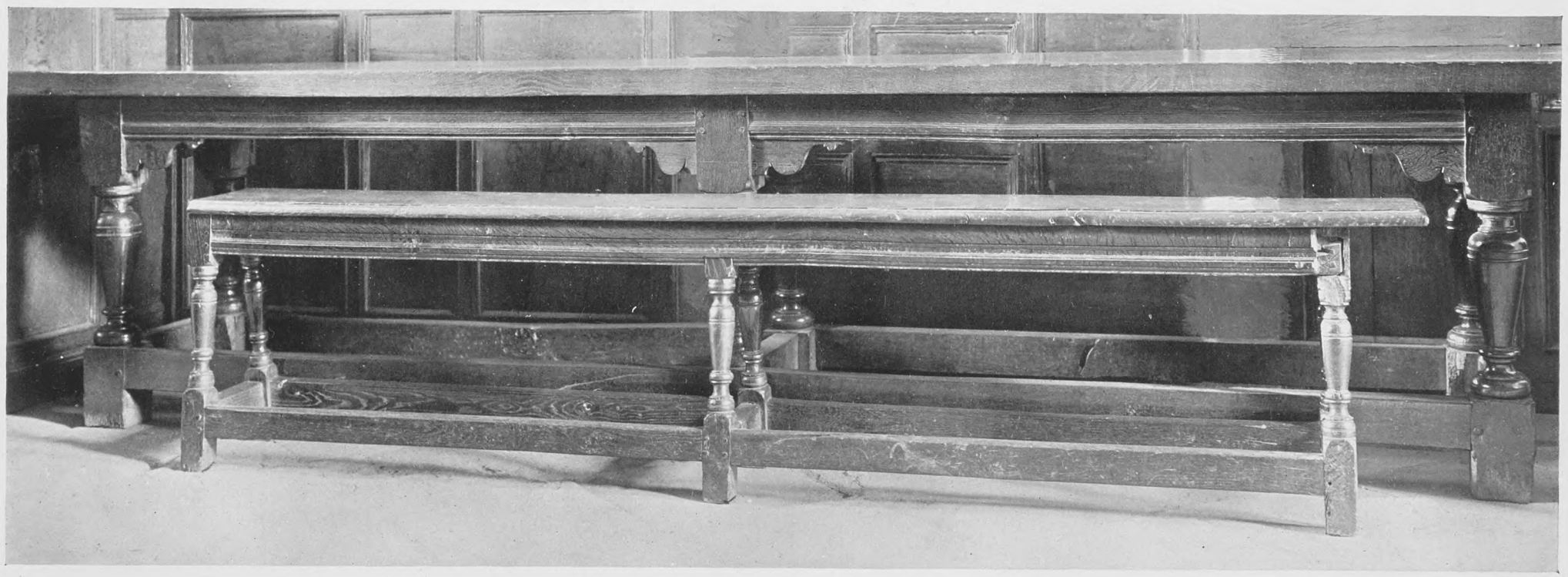


FIG. 178.—OAK TABLE. Property of the DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE.

opening a coffee-house in St. Michael's Alley, Cornhill. Although a tea brewed of herbs was drunk in Elizabeth's time, and the word 'Tee-pot' occurs in the list of plate made at Hardwick in 1583, an early well-known reference to tea in England is the advertisement in the *Mercurius Politicus* of 1658 :—

'That excellent and by all physitians approved, China Drink, called by the Chineans Tcha, by other nations Tay, *alias* Tee, is sold at the Sultaness Head, a cophee-house in Sweeting's Rents, by the Royal Exchange, London.'

And the following appeared in the *Public Advertiser* for June 16th, 1657 :—

'In Bishopsgate Street, in Queen's Head Alley, at a Frenchman's house, is an excellent West India drink called chocolate, to be sold, where you may have it ready at any time, and also unmade, at reasonable rates.'

The great increase in the quantity of small tables made after 1660 is no doubt due to the taste for these drinks, coming so rapidly into fashion, that in 1675 Charles II. attempted to suppress coffee-houses as public nuisances. The table (fig. 179) is an early instance of a small flap table with folding-legs of about 1638. When the flap was not in use the table could be placed flush against the wall, and with but slight alteration this method of folding-leg has been continued to the present day. The frame is carved with a waved and incised band, and has a single drawer ; the legs are columnar in form and ringed ; they support small arches with the usual spandrels. A deep and strong lower rail connects the plinths of the legs ; at the back, moving on a pivot, are the extra legs to support the flap. The folding-flap, open, is shown in fig. 180 ; this table closely resembles the last specimen, with the exception of the lower rail (which is missing at the sides); the rest of the table is quite plain, save for a few lightly carved lines; the top is original. Fig. 181 is a larger and later development, its ringed legs, six in number, pointing to a date about 1663. The back is given in order to explain the position of the folding-leg when not in use ; the broad stretcher is unusual. Another form is shown in fig. 182, date about 1648. It is triangular in shape, with an

octagonal top, the legs of plain baluster form being divided into two tiers by a triangular shelf. These small tables are the first portable forms used for light refreshments. Seward, in his anecdotes of the great physician Sydenham, who lived in Charles I.'s and II.'s time, writes in connection with one of these small tables :—

'Whilst suffering from gout, he was sitting near an open window, on the ground-floor of his house in St. James's Square, respiring the cool breeze on a summer's evening and reflecting with a serene countenance, and great complacency, on the alleviation to human misery that his skill in his art had enabled him to give. While this divine man was enjoying one of these delicious reveries, a thief took away from a small table near to which he was sitting, a silver tankard filled with his favourite beverage, small-beer, in which a sprig of rosemary had been immersed, and ran off with it.'



FIG. 179.—OAK TABLE. Property of SEYMOUR LUCAS, Esq.

A side-table with a cupboard in front, also about the date 1648, is given in fig. 183; the panels are rudely carved, and the rails and stretchers inlaid with bands of coarse diagonal marqueterie. Such a piece

of furniture might have been used in a bedroom as a washing-stand or dressing-table, and a good many are in existence. A rather more ornamental small table is fig. 184, of about 1660. This is faced with two drawers, panelled with yew mouldings in the fashion of the time, and supported by plain and ogeed brackets; the legs break out into balls, a plain survival of a former taste. The knob handles to the drawers and the stretchers and feet are restorations.

The long seat, with an upright panelled back and arms, called a



FIG. 180.—OAK TABLE. Height, 2 feet 6 inches; width of top, 2 feet 10 inches.
Property of T. VALENTINE GARLAND, Esq.



FIG. 181.—OAK TABLE. Width, 5 feet; height, 2 feet 6 inches. Property of FRANK GREEN, Esq.



FIG. 182.—OAK TABLE. Height, 2 feet 3 inches; width of frame, 2 feet. Property of C. E. KEMPE, Esq.



FIG. 183.—OAK SIDE TABLE. Property of MORGAN WILLIAMS, Esq.



FIG. 184.—OAK TABLE. Property of A. L. RADFORD, Esq.



FIG. 185.—OAK SETTLE. Length, 5 feet 2 inches; height, 3 feet 5 inches.
Property of SIR CHARLES LAWES-WITTEWRONGE, Bart.



FIG. 186.—OAK SETTLE. Length, 6 feet 1 inch; height, 3 feet 9 inches; depth, 1 foot 7 inches.
Property of C. E. KEMPE, Esq.

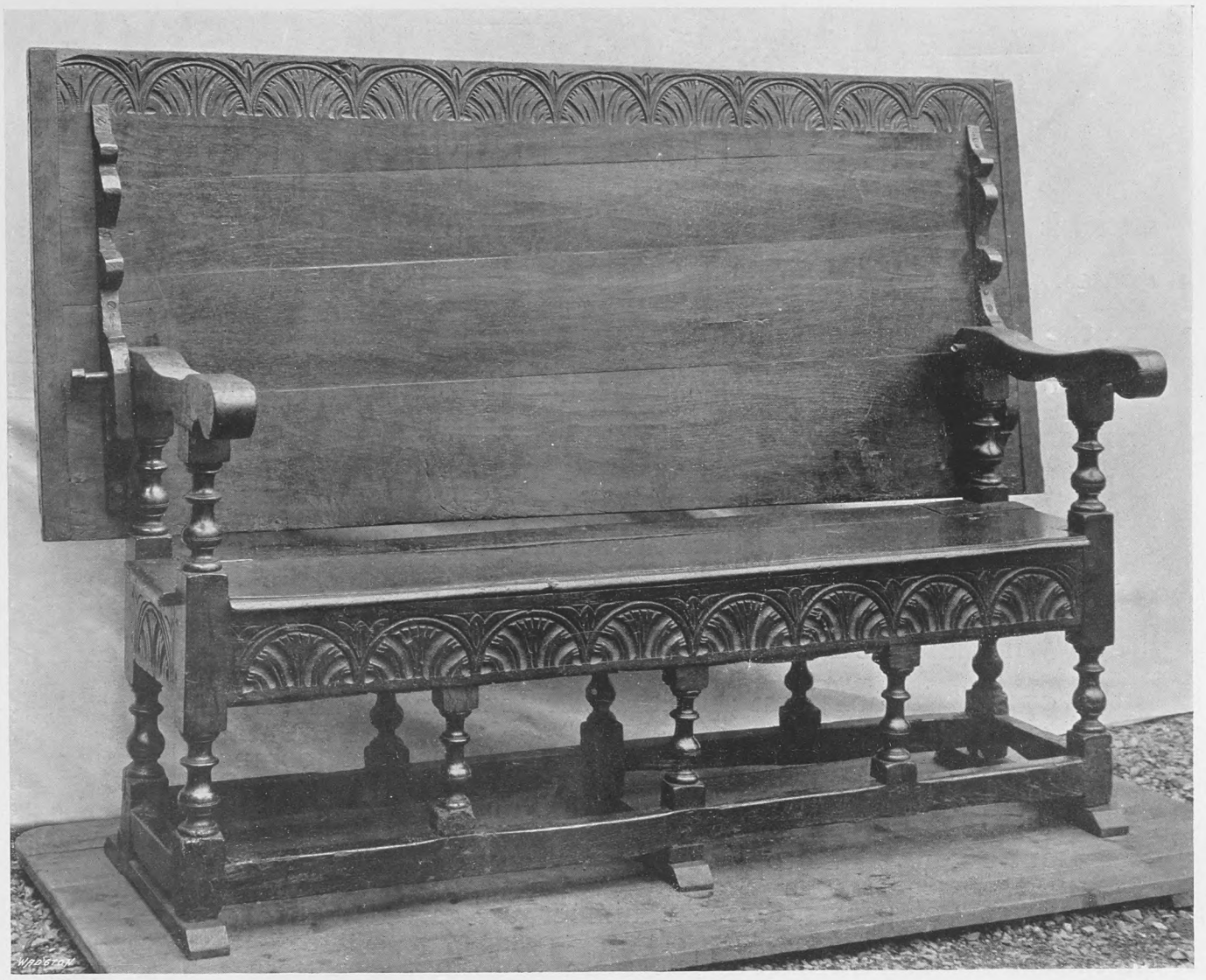


FIG. 187.—OAK TABLE SETTLE. Length, 5 feet 10 inches; width of top, 2 feet 4 inches.
Property of H. MARTIN GIBBS, Esq.

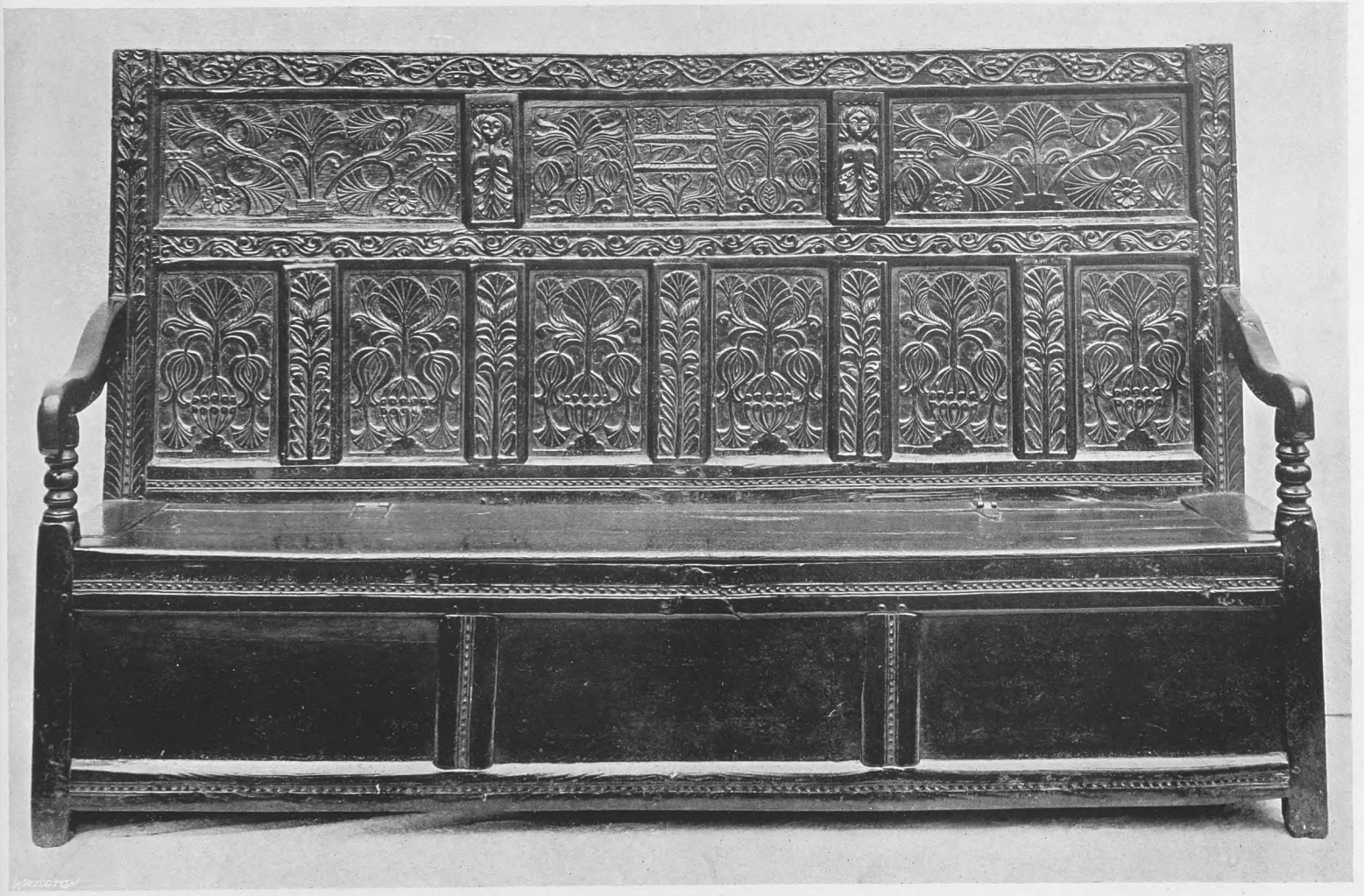


FIG. 188.—OAK SETTLE. Length, 6 feet 7 inches; height, 4 feet 2 inches.
Property of H. MARTIN GIBBS, Esq.

settle, is of very early origin, and was usually placed in the great halls of houses. In the early specimens the ends forming the arms were panelled, and the backs were very high. Being exceedingly cumbersome pieces of furniture, these were gradually superseded by a lighter form, with open arms and a lower back. French 'bancs,' of the time of Francis I., are still in existence, with the panels beautifully carved in Renaissance design, while the lower portion is decorated with linenfold. It is probable that pieces of this description were also made here during the reigns of Henry VIII. and Elizabeth, but they no longer exist. The seat in all early settles opened in box form; in the later specimens this is also general, though occasionally they are found with an open front composed of legs and foot-rail. The simplicity of fig. 185 suggests Puritanical taste, and a date about 1645. The top rail is carved with a chain-cartouche pattern; the upper row of panels, three in number, are carved with a double loop, the surface of the panel being left plain to form the pattern. The arms are set unusually high, and the supports are of Cromwellian type; the seat forms a box, and the front is divided into two large plain panels framed in rails and a centre stile with a deep channel moulding. The handsome settle (fig. 186) is dated 1647. The cresting, composed of somewhat meaningless scrolls, runs almost the entire length of the top rail, which terminates in two worked finials. The back is formed of five tall panels, carved with conventional flowers and swans on a grained ground in arched compartments; these are divided and framed by stiles inlaid with a neat checker-work of two coloured woods. At the bottom of the panels are the initials of the original owner, Alexander Lindsay, the date 1647, and the motto of the Lindsay family, 'ASTRA CASTRA, NUMEN LUMEN,' 'The stars (our) citadels, God (our) light.' All the uprights and rails are inlaid with the same checker pattern. The seat opens as a box working on S hinges, and the hasp and lock-plate are also original; the bottom is divided into three panels, with the large and rather flat carving on a grained surface, much used about this time. Alexander, second Baron

Lindsay of Balcarres and first Earl of Balcarres, to whom this settle once belonged, became hereditary Governor of Edinburgh Castle, Secretary of State, and High Commissioner to the General Assembly, and died in exile at Breda in 1659. The settle was discovered in a house in Canongate, Edinburgh, and the brilliancy of its appearance was evidently a protest by an adherent of the King's against the gloomy fashions of the Parliamentary party.

An uncomfortable and economical effort of Cromwellian inspiration was the table-settle, where the back, working on pins, could be pulled over to rest on the arms, and so form a table top. Fig. 187 is one of these, of about the date 1655; the carving on it is extremely rough; it stands on ten legs, connected by a foot-rail mounted on to a base, for further security; in this instance the base is a restoration. This make was also extended to chairs, as in fig. 189. Here the top is round, and when let down forms a small table. The incised arched design follows out the lines of a chair of the time. Settles continued to be made throughout the eighteenth century; they gradually became plain in type, and chiefly in demand for inns, farmhouses, and servants' quarters. A late specimen of the Jacobean type is given in fig. 188. The decoration on the top rail is open and scanty; the knob finials are missing, though the holes for them are visible; the back is divided into three oblong and six upright panels, carved flatly in debased conventional ornament, the upper stiles being worked with barbaric representations of female terminal figures, and the panel between these bears the initials I. M. C., with the date 1720. The seat opens as a box, and the front is divided into three plain panels, with a toothed beading down the centre of the stiles and rails.



Fig. 189.—OAK TABLE CHAIR. Property of F. W. Phillips, Esq.

CHAPTER IX

EARLY forms of Cromwellian upholstered furniture were remarkable for severity and discomfort. This can be seen in the couch (fig. 190), which has its original pig-skin covering on the back and rails; that of the seat, hidden by a rug in the illustration, has been renewed; the rake of the sides, which are in one piece with the legs, must have entailed a considerable waste of wood. The chairs (fig. 191) correspond in period and design to this couch; the leathers on the seats and backs of both are original, and on the taller specimen has been lightly tooled; the nailed banding to the seat-rail is missing on the smaller chair. The front legs and stretchers are knobbed, a pattern which found favour with the Puritans; this fashion began about the date of the King's execution, and continued into the reign of Charles II.

Towards the end of the Commonwealth, a desire for more cheerful-looking furniture arose, and this type of chair was then consequently

covered with the stamped and coloured leathers imported from the Continent. In the Verney Papers there is a letter from a clergyman, written in 1658, with a reference to this taste :—

> 'Rather than go to a much higher price for Hangings, etc., I would gladly bestow a matter of £8 in wainscot for my parlor, then I should like very well this painted leather for a suit of chairs and stools.'

This coloured stamped leather would have had but a short life when used for chair coverings, as neither the lacquered silver nor the paint could resist the friction of wear. The panelled-back arm-chair still continued to be made, and there are many dated specimens after the Restoration in existence. Fig. 192 is of about the date 1660; the panelled back is high,



FIG. 190.—OAK COUCH. Full length, 5 feet 11 inches; length of seat, 4 feet 6 inches; height, 2 feet 10 inches. Property of C. E. KEMPE, Esq.

surmounted by a tall scrolled cresting, finishing at the sides in ears and centred by a bearded mask; the carving of the panel—a representation of the seed-pod and flower of the cocoa-tree—is thin in execution; the uprights framing it are decorated with a triple channel moulding, and finish below in very broad back legs; the arms, set low, are narrow, the supports finishing with legs turned in baluster fashion. The chairs from Hardwick (figs. 193 and 194) show the development of the ringed baluster which came in at this time. In fig. 193 a mask again centres the scrolls of the cresting, but the back is divided into two panels, the upper being dated 1662, and the lower carved with a pattern much found on ceilings of the time. Fig. 194 has the same subdivision of the back panel, but resembles early chairs in its compact form; the upper panel is carved with monsters in low relief, the lower with a fine strap-work; the arm supports and legs are ringed. Another chair, a few years later in date (fig. 195), has the same high scrolled cresting, ringed arm supports, and broad back legs; the design, however, of the back panel in its flowing lines foreshadows the decoration of the coming reign.

Plate XIV. shows a pair of double chairs or love-seats. They are made on the same lines as other Jacobean oak chairs; their date is about 1700, and the interest chiefly centres on their proportion, which is rare. A very distinct effort, inspired by Italian chairs of a rather earlier date, is to be found in the oak chairs of Yorkshire and Derbyshire origin, made between 1650 and 1675. These are the real progenitors of open back chairs, for those of Elizabeth's reign were of too intermittent and exceptional an occurrence to have created a fashion. In the early specimens of these, the back opens in an arcade and knobbed finials, supported on turned balusters standing on a centre rail. Fig. 196 has this rail carved in the style of about 1650, with the uprights of the back ending in scrolled finials, which are all that remain of the previous Jacobean cresting and ears; below these are the applied split baluster ornament so much in favour at the time; the seat is sunk for a squab, and the legs are knobbed in the



H. CLARENCE MAHAFFY, Esq.

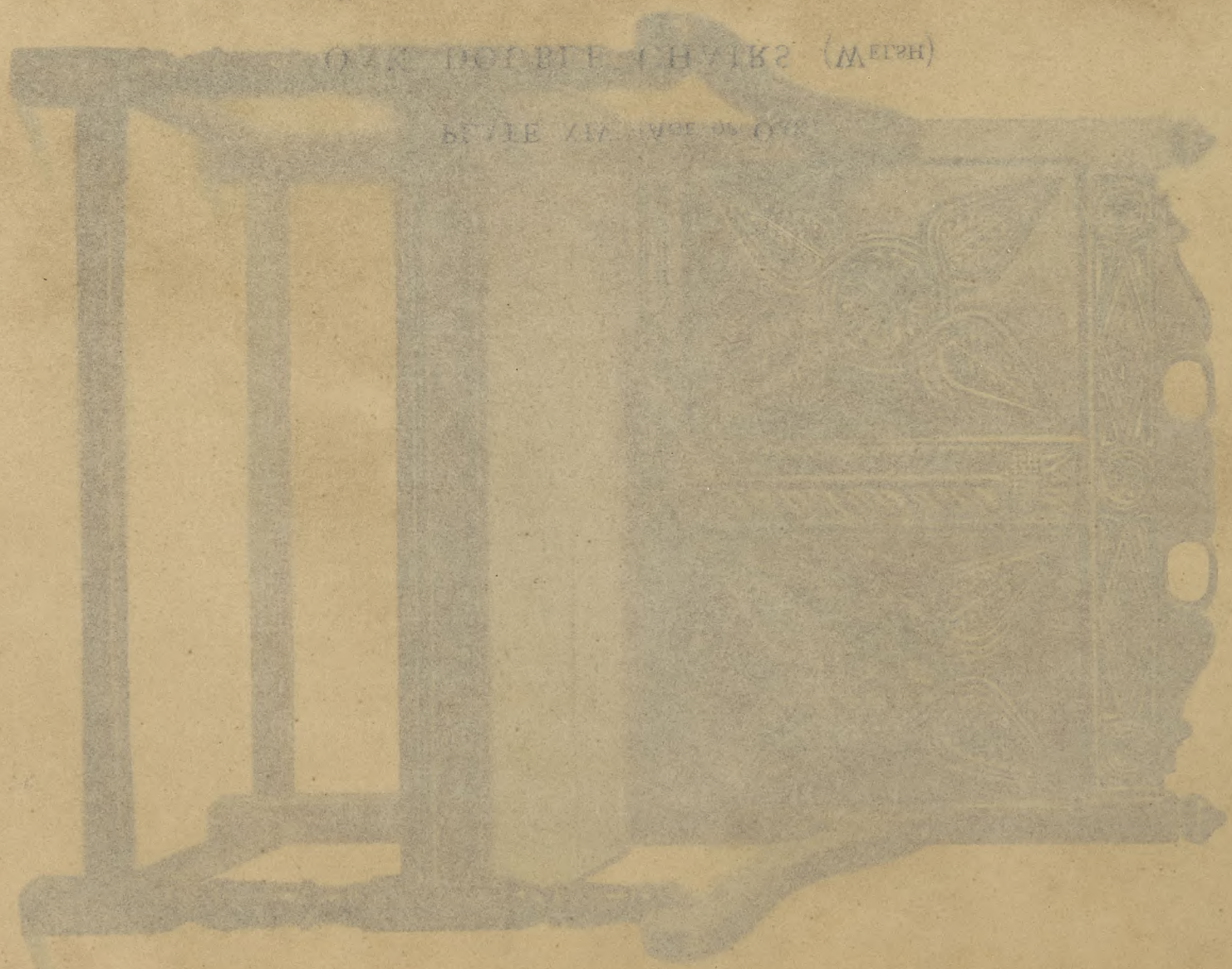
PROPERTY OF

HEIGHT 3 FEET 4½ INCHES

WIDTH 2 FEET 4 INCHES

OAK DOUBLE CHAIRS (WELSH)

BEING AN EXAMPLE OF OAK



surmounted by a tall scrolled cresting, finishing at the sides in ears and centred by a bearded mask; the carving of the panel—a representation of the seed-pod and flower of the cocoa-tree—is thin in execution; the uprights framing it are decorated with a triple channel moulding, and finish below in very broad back legs; the arms, set low, are narrow, the supports finishing with legs turned in baluster fashion. The chairs from Hardwick (figs. 193 and 194) show the development of the ringed baluster which came in at this time. In fig. 193 a mask again centres the scrolls of the cresting, but the back is divided into two panels, the upper being dated 1662, and the lower carved with a pattern much found on ceilings of the time. Fig. 194 has the same subdivision of the back panel, but resembles early chairs in its compact form; the upper panel is carved with monsters in low relief, the lower with a strap-work; the arm supports and legs are ringed. Another chair, a few years later in date (fig. 195), has the same high scrolled cresting, ringed arm supports, and broad back legs; the design, however, of the back panel in its flowing lines fore-shadows the decoration of the coming reign.

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PLATE XIV (AGE OF OAK)

OAK DOUBLE CHAIRS (WELSH)

HEIGHT, 3 FEET 6½ INCHES — HEIGHT, 3 FEET 4 INCHES

PROPERTY OF

H. CLARENCE WHAITE, ESQ.







FIG. 191.—OAK CHAIRS.

Cromwellian manner. In fig. 197, a few years later in date, a similar treatment is followed without the arcading, and the broad and flat rails at the back are hooped and escalloped; the knobbed finials are here reversed as pendants. A still later form is fig. 198, approximating in shape the tall walnut chairs of the end of Charles II.'s reign, with which it is contemporary. The lunette at the top, carved with a traditional rose, the incoming C scrolls to the centre rail, and the plain baluster stretcher,



FIG. 192.—OAK CHAIR.
Property of SIR GEORGE DONALDSON.



FIG. 193.—OAK CHAIR. Height, 4 feet 2 inches.
Property of the DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE.

are transitional details that should be noticed; it is also interesting to compare with this the late panel-back chair (fig. 199), dated 1691. In this last specimen there are traces of all the motives that once decorated panel-back chairs. The scrolled cresting, here abnormally hooped, the human mask, the arch with pilasters and flowering plant, the nicking that represents the upright laurelled pattern of the Renaissance—all show that the first-rate craftsman had discarded these patterns, and that in less efficient hands their intention had become without purpose.



FIG. 194.—OAK CHAIR. Height, 4 feet.
Property of the DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE.



FIG. 195.—OAK CHAIR.
Property of ERNEST CROFTS, Esq.

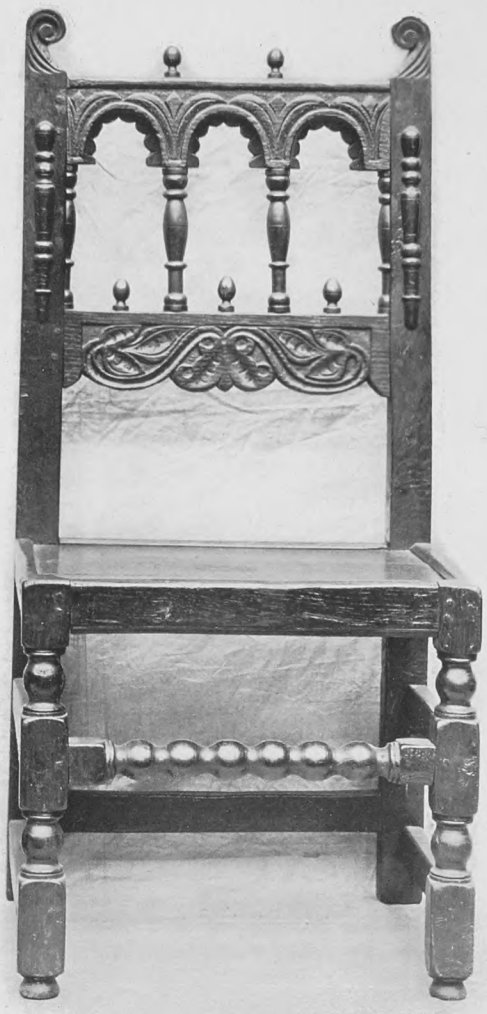


Fig. 196.—OAK CHAIR.
Victoria and Albert Museum.

An interesting form of court cupboard, with an extra canopy and shelf for the display of china, was much made in Wales, and known there as a cwpwedd tridarn. A specimen, dated 1662, exists at Gwydyr Castle, the decoration and lower portion corresponding with the ordinary court cupboard of the time. Fig. 200 is a tridarn dated 1695. The frieze of the canopy is plain, the lower moulding being perforated for a spoon rack; the supports to this are columnar and ringed, and high enough to allow a row of plates to be arranged on the back shelf, the smaller china, etc., being placed in front. In the inlaid cornice of the second tier there is a secret shelf, accessible only through the cupboards immediately underneath; the remainder of the piece is on the lines of the ordinary court cupboard. The decoration throughout is simple, and the carving on the lower doors represents the favourite dragon design, so frequently found on Welsh furniture.

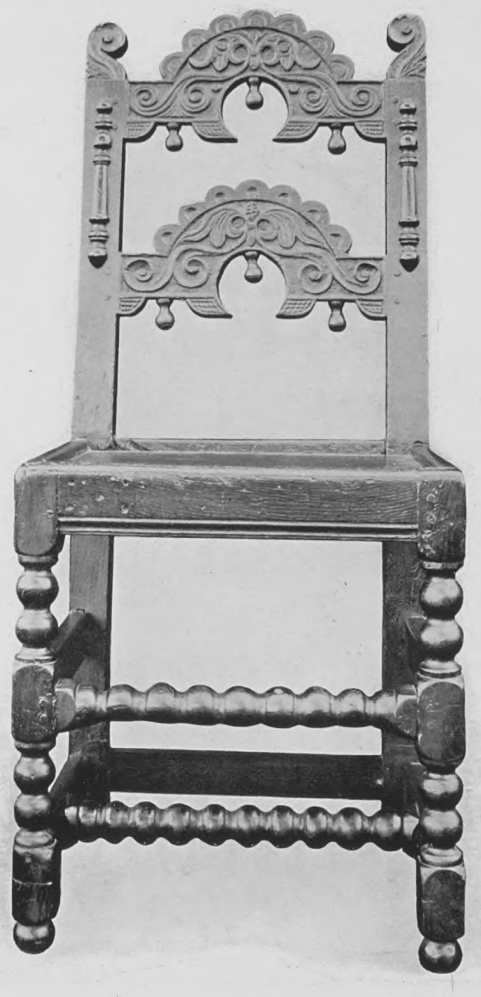
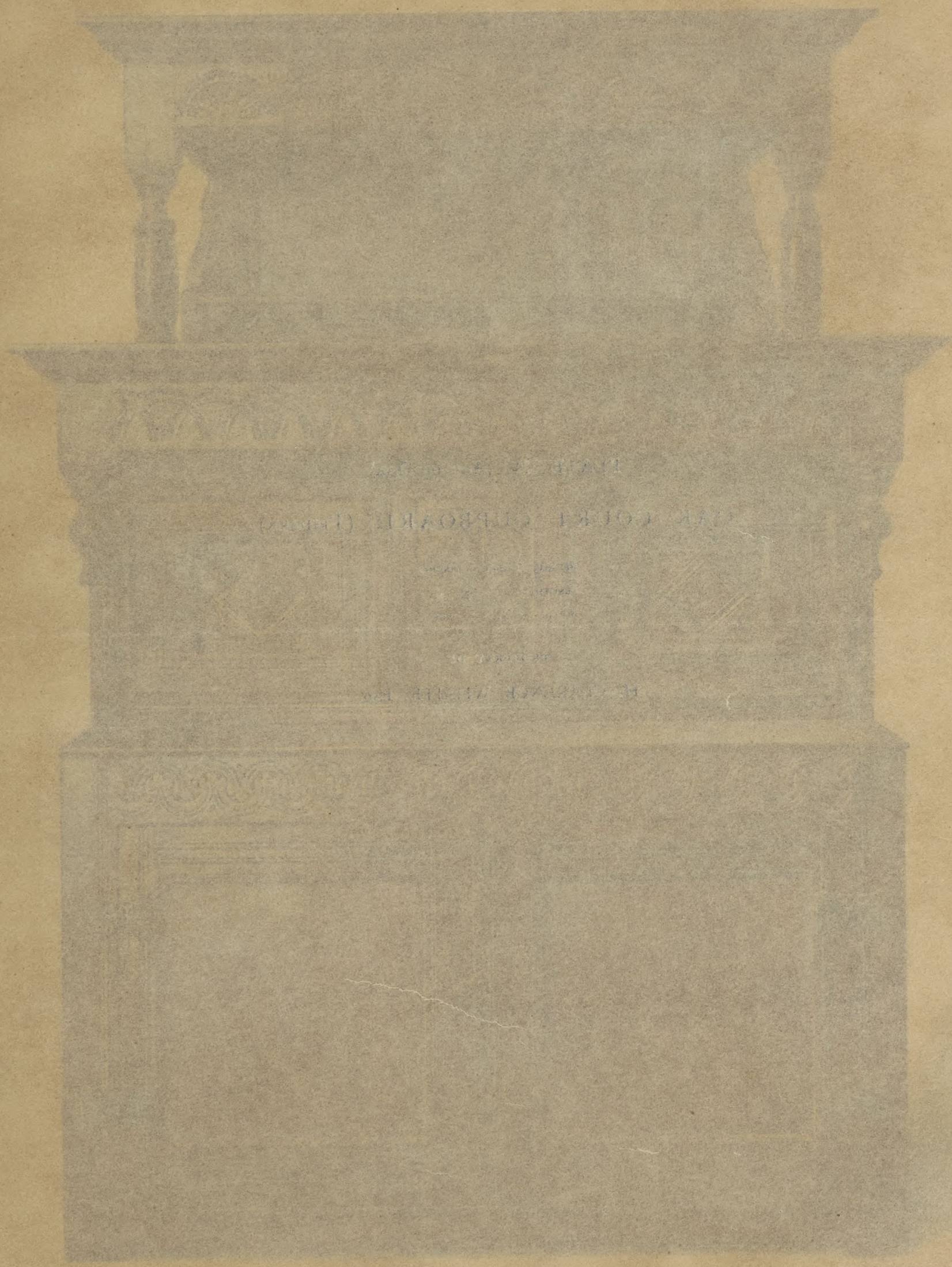


Fig. 197.—OAK CHAIR.
Property of A. L. Radford, Esq.

Plate xv. is another example of



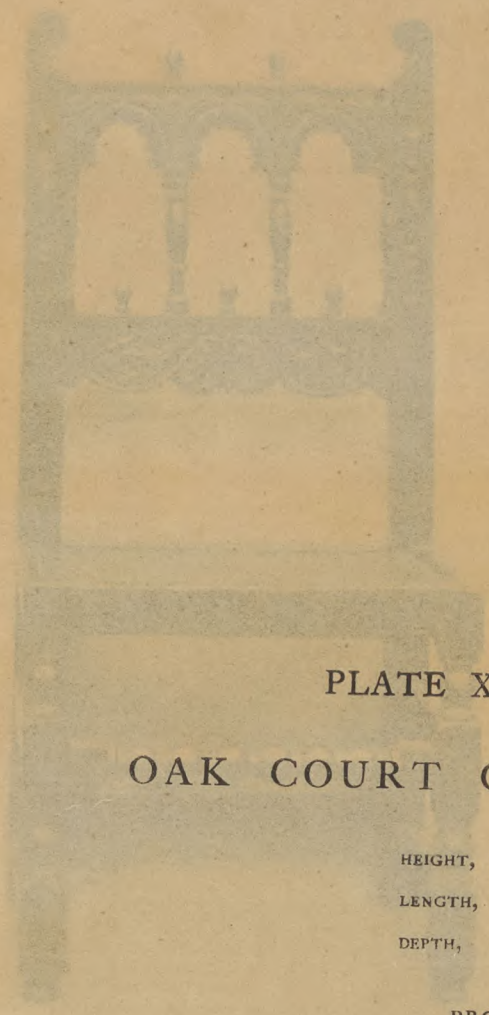


PLATE XV (AGE OF OAK)

OAK COURT CUPBOARD (TRIDARN)

HEIGHT, 6 FEET 9 INCHES

LENGTH, 2 „ 6½ „

DEPTH, 2 „ 1 INCH

PROPERTY OF

H. CLARENCE WHAITE, ESQ.

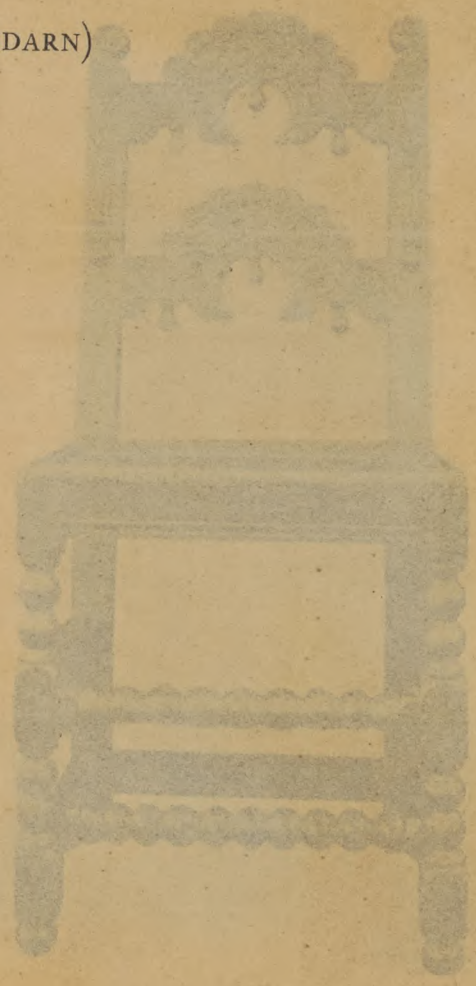


FIG. 105.—OAK CHAIR.
Property of A. L. RADFORD, ESQ.



Shirley Slocombe

about 1700. Here, in the centre compartment, the balusters, which in early types supported the canopy, are replaced by pendants; the bottom doors are composed of single large panels, a change that came in at this time. It will be seen that this style of carving has now lost all interest of design, but the cross mouldings are very neatly run.



FIG. 199.—OAK CHAIR. Height, 3 feet 6 inches.
Property of SIR GEORGE DONALDSON.

A distinct form of small dresser is shown in fig. 201, in which there is a curious combination of decoration. The strap-work scrolls (which have lost their centre finial) of the top, the panels at the back, and the brackets supporting the shelves, are of a much earlier design than the construction of the lower portion or cupboard, which, with its inlaid emblems and various mouldings, is of about the date 1665. It is probably, like so many of these pieces that are composite in style, of country make.



FIG. 198.—OAK CHAIR.
VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM.

Chests continued to be made during the Commonwealth, though not in such large quantities as before. Fig. 202 is an unusually elaborate chest for this period, dated in marqueterie over the arches A.D. 1653, and is a



FIG. 200.—OAK COURT CUPBOARD (TRIDARN). Height, 6 feet 3 inches; width, 4 feet 6 inches; depth, 2 feet. Property of HENRY GROGAN, Esq.

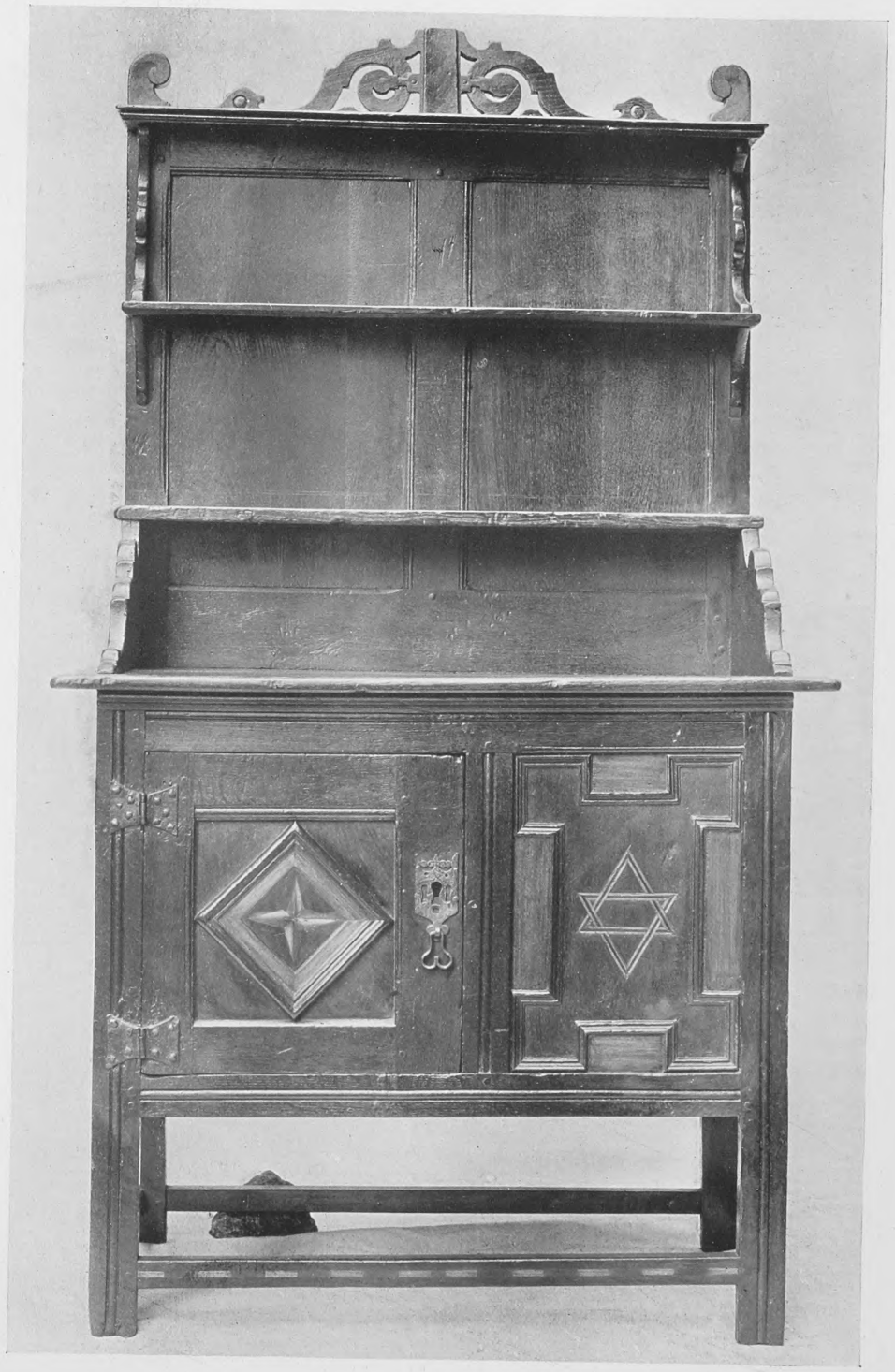


FIG. 201.—OAK DRESSER. Height, 2 feet 2 inches; width, 3 feet. Property of ERNEST CROFTS, Esq.

very late representation of the early style, combining marqueterie, carving, and terminal figures. It was very possibly inspired by fig. 138, also in the possession of the same family. The front is divided into two panels, under broad depressed arches carved with palm branches, and headed by the mask of a savage; each panel is inlaid with the portico of a building, out of which a man armed with a sword and gun issues; on the outer stiles are male terminal figures, with hair and beard dressed in cavalier fashion, and the figure in the centre represents a female savage. The bottom opens in one long drawer, inlaid with marqueterie, in a design of the previous reign, but the marqueterie on the frieze beneath the lid is tending towards the scrolled lines that formed so important a decoration on furniture towards the end of the century; the feet and the corbels are carved. Although a very interesting chest in colour and general effect, it is easy to trace decadence in almost every line of its design; the joinery, however, shows that this craft was now making rapid strides. This good workmanship is shown again in fig. 203, a Scotch chest from the same source as the settle (fig. 186), and very likely by the same hand; the top and side panels are carved, a feature often found on late chests; the divided palm branch that decorates the uprights of the frame is an unsatisfactory novelty, but the design of the frieze on the upper rail is good; the lower rail is neatly inlaid above a well-run moulding. The interest centres on the inscription . THOMAS . IV . CHA . REX . II . SPENCER . signifying the date 1653—the piece being Scotch—as in that country the adherents of Charles II. considered his reign began on the day of his father's death.

These carved oak chests practically ceased to be made for the richer classes after this date, and, when replaced by lighter furniture, were probably sold or given away, in many instances to the servants attached to large houses on the occasion of their marriage, thus drifting into the cottages and farmhouses, where they were found constantly used as cornbins in Victorian times.

Another form of chest with drawers is shown in fig. 204, where the top opens in a shallow box for clothes, the doors beneath opening on two drawers, and the bottom compartment being composed of one long drawer. The decoration throughout is a mixture of carving and applied work, the arcading on the doors resembling the backs of the north country chairs, as in figs. 196 and 198. The date is approximately 1655.

There appears to have been an interval between the introduction of the pearl and bone inlaid chest with drawers, such as figs. 141 and 142, and the later renewal of this fashion. Soon after 1650 a certain interest in furniture again arose, and these chests with drawers point to a revival of the taste that was then taking place. An interesting series of these is given in the following illustrations, though their chronological order is difficult to place, as only in one instance is the piece dated.

The earliest is fig. 205, of about the date 1648. It resembles in construction the carved oak specimen (fig. 140). Underneath the corbelled cornice and thin top is one long drawer, inlaid with a chess-board pattern of ivory and zebra-wood; the two doors beneath, opening on a series of drawers, are geometrically panelled and inlaid with ivory, centring in a highly bevelled octagon, the sides of which are faced with zebra-wood; this piece was originally mounted on a low stand. The next link in this series is fig. 206, in which the octagon idea is elaborated, the mouldings of the panel carrying out the motive. The upper portion opens in one very deep drawer, panelled in two octagons, but divided by a deeply recessed representation of an arch and stairway, a decoration copied from Italian cabinets; the lower portion is separated from the upper by a narrow moulding which at a later date increases in width. The doors are treated like the drawers, with the addition of a fine zigzag line of ivory and an inlay of snake-wood; the split baluster ornament takes here a much more important place. This has been variously named split baluster, cannon, or mace decoration, but in reality is only the Elizabethan and Jacobean



FIG. 202.—OAK INLAID CHEST. Length, 4 feet 6 inches; height, 3 feet. Property of ERNEST CROFTS, Esq.



FIG. 203.—OAK CHEST. Property of C. E. KEMPE, Esq.

applied walnut pendant, inverted, and elaborated. The base moulding is of the knobbed Cromwellian pattern found on chairs; the sides are plainly panelled. Drop handles replace the original wood and ivory peg handles. Fig. 207 is of earlier design, and of about the same date as the last piece, from which it only differs in construction by the introduction of two top drawers; these are inlaid with bone and mother-of-pearl decoration; the subdivision of the panels is rectangular; the archway in the centre is here represented by a flat inlay of the pearl and bone, and on the uprights that



FIG. 204.—OAK CHEST WITH DRAWERS. Height, 3 feet 9 inches; length, 3 feet 7 inches; depth, 1 foot 8 inches. Property of S. CAMPBELL CORY, Esq.

frame the drawer inverted pendants of early form are applied. A further interest lies in the wood which forms the bevelled centre of the panels, as it is, with the applied pendants, corbels, and bosses, of mahogany. This wood was not used for the construction of furniture till the end of the seventeenth century, and it has generally been accepted as

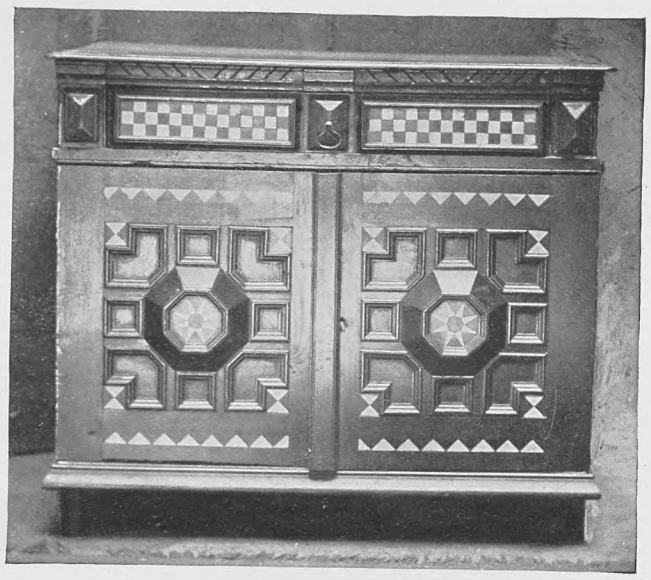


FIG. 205.—OAK CHEST WITH DRAWERS.
Property of MESSRS. MORANT.



FIG. 206.—OAK CHEST WITH DRAWERS. Height, 3 feet 8 inches; width, 3 feet 8 inches; depth, 2 feet. Property of MESSRS. J. MALLETT AND SON.

a fact, that no introduction of it, even as ornament in decoration, is to be found before 1670, though this example is not later than the date 1655. The open door shows the usual arrangement of the drawers in these pieces; the centre rail and plinth are of bold character. In fig. 208 the upper portion opens like a chest; the lid and corbels resemble the last specimen in



FIG. 207.—OAK CUPBOARD WITH DRAWERS. Height, 3 feet 8 inches; width, 3 feet 8 inches; depth, 1 foot 9 inches. Property of PERCY MACQUOID, Esq.

their mouldings; the corners and centres of the panels are inlaid with bone and mother-of-pearl; the archway is very deeply recessed, and the circular mouldings within the octagons are spoked. The applied pendants have now become elongated, and are losing the trace of their origin. The lower portion opens in two drawers, and the centre panel between them bears on an escutcheon the date 1661. This chest is upon its original stand, the type on which all these low-standing pieces of furniture were



FIG. 208.—CHEST WITH DRAWERS. Height, 3 feet 6 inches; length, 4 feet 5 inches; depth, 1 foot 10 inches. Property of ARTHUR JAMES, Esq.



FIG. 209.—OAK CHEST WITH DRAWERS. Height, 4 feet 6 inches; width, 3 feet 9 inches; depth, 2 feet. Property of SIR CHARLES LAWES-WITTEWRONGE, Bart.

placed. The fashion for these chests must have been great, as many varieties of them are to be found following rapidly upon one another in date. Fig. 209 is a very carefully finished example, though the feet are restorations. The corbels of the frieze are in this instance flat, and inlaid with channels of snake-wood, studded, top and bottom, with small ebony bosses.

As the evolution of this motive continues, the decoration becomes more and more dotted and bossed, and ornaments are glued on in imitation of the solid work of a former time. In fig. 210, of about 1675, the construction is still the same, but the upper portion is divided into six drawers, and stands on a plain and projecting moulding that forms a cornice to the lower portion; the bottom opens in two very narrow drawers over the doors. The split baluster ornament has here developed into small columns mounted on tall plinths; the fronts of the drawers and bevels of the panels are faced with snake-wood, the corners being ornamented with discs of ivory.

In fig. 211 the front is so overlaid with strips and panels of rose-wood and snake-wood, that but little of the original oak surface shows. The inlaid arch with a checkered floor is still retained in the centre of the upper portion, but the sharp angles to the panel mouldings in the upper drawers, and the narrow panels which break on the angle of the central division, infer that the date is about 1680; the flat corbelled projection of the two friezes also point to this date. In these last two examples there is an attempt at architectural construction, which in some degree redeems the poverty of imagination, and in the pearl inlaid specimens there is a decided decorative effect; but in other oak furniture of this period, of which fig. 212 is a characteristic example, the decoration is no better than that found on a birthday cake. The weakness of the applied process is apparent, for though evidently subjected to no undue hard usage, many of the glued-on bosses have dropped off.

Figs. 213, 214, and 215 represent the final development, where the

lower cupboard doors are discarded, and the piece of furniture assumes the form known as the 'chest of drawers.'

The so-called snake-wood was imported from Demerara; it is known technically as *Poratinera Guianensis*. Zebra-wood is produced by the tree known now as *Omphalobium Lamberti*.

There are many small articles of oak furniture which it has been found impossible, for want of space, to touch upon, and though in many instances



FIG. 210.—CHEST WITH DRAWERS. Property of MESSRS. MORANT.

finer isolated specimens could have been given in illustration, it has been thought better throughout this work to avoid what does not bear directly on the evolution of each period.

Of these periods, it has already been shown that so little English Gothic furniture is in existence, that we are forced to construct in



FIG. 211.—CHEST WITH DRAWERS. Height, 4 feet 8 inches; length, 4 feet 1 inch; depth, 2 feet 2 inches. Property of ARTHUR JAMES, Esq.

imagination, from architecture, pictures, and the more numerous specimens of foreign furniture, the many missing links. It must be remembered, in reviewing this period, that the foreign fashion in furniture practically controlled the taste here, and that an individual fashion was then more widespread than it is to-day.

By the end of the fifteenth century—the period selected for the beginning of this book—Gothic had already passed its zenith, and the later



FIG. 212.—OAK DOUBLE CUPBOARD. Height, 4 feet; width, 3 feet 8 inches; depth, 1 foot 7 inches.

developments reproduced on English furniture were soon set aside by the vigorous and material feeling of the Elizabethan Renaissance, which laid the foundations of an individual style, the details of which lasted as long as the fashion for oak furniture continued. The simplicity and austerity of Puritan taste was not without charm, but this taste, being content with the abolition of ornament, without the development of any new or true proportion, came to a somewhat sudden termination; the last attempts in decoration to relieve the dreary monotony, being uneducated in form and artificial in method.



FIG. 213.—CHEST OF DRAWERS. Property of ARTHUR JAMES, Esq.



FIG. 214.—OAK CHEST OF DRAWERS. Property of MESSRS. MORANT.



FIG. 215.—OAK CHEST OF DRAWERS. Property of A. L. RADFORD, Esq.

ENGLISH FURNITURE

With the Restoration, the Age of Oak came to an end. The solidity and strange originality of beauty, which in so vivid and virile a manner pervaded the furniture and all art of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, gradually disappeared, giving way to more modern forms of thought, where in furniture the guiding principles consisted of constructional excellence, comfort, and, above all, what was suitable to gaiety and the joy of living.

English oak furniture of Gothic, Elizabethan, and Jacobean times represented the temperament of those for whom it was made, and in endurance and solidity was typical of the people who lived in those ages.

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ERRATA

Page vi.,	line 11,	.	.	read *out* for *but*.
„ 6,	„ 10,	.	.	„ *it* has been, etc.
„ 11,	Fig. 12,	.	.	„ E. A. Barry, Esq.
„ 17,	„ 17,	.	.	„ E. A. Barry, Esq.
„ 34,	„ 35,	.	.	„ E. A. Barry, Esq.
„ 40,	line 3,	.	.	„ *royal* for *roval*.
„ 43,	Fig. 42,	.	.	„ E. A. Barry, Esq.
„ 104,	line 20,	.	.	„ plate *vi.* for *viii.*

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